

# Weymouth

A sepia-toned photograph of two dog statues, likely bulldogs, perched on stone pedestals in a park-like setting. The larger statue is on the right, sitting on a tall, rectangular pedestal. The smaller statue is on the left, sitting on a shorter, wider pedestal. In the background, there are trees and a wooden fence. The overall tone is nostalgic and artistic.

An Anthology of Poetry  
Edited by Sam Ragan





# Weymouth

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An Anthology of Poetry

*edited by*  
Sam Ragan



The St. Andrews Press  
Laurinburg, North Carolina

**Coordinating Editor**  
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## Foreword

My latest Weymouth-inspired poem hot in my hand, I stopped by *The Pilot* to see Sam Ragan. Sam sat behind the mountainous horizontal-file-of-a-desk, and we talked about how everyone who has stayed at Weymouth has been inspired to create a poem, a painting, or a piece of music in its honor. He again talked about the dream he had shared at the Poetry Festival in 1979: to publish an anthology of poetry written by writers who had been at The Weymouth Center. We agreed the time had come; and Sam, with his busy schedule, wanted me to handle the project.

After thinking about the immensity of such an undertaking, I knew it was more than a one-person job, and Marsha Warren was the very one to help. I was pleased when in July of 1986, she agreed to lend her experience to the project. She began the tedious job of writing grants, and together we began collecting information and searching for names and addresses. We read scraps of paper—sometimes with a magnifying glass, the backs of envelopes scratched with barely decipherable names, initialed poems stuffed in folders, even reservations on old calendars. We never found some of the writers even with all our efforts by letter, by phone calls made by a “telephonophobic”, and by putting a notice in *The Pilot*.

I was delighted when Sam asked me to write a personal foreword for the book. Weymouth had become very important to me: a place to write, to learn, to be with friends. At Weymouth I have watched my daughter grow into a published poet, my son receive an award for his poem about his grandfather, and I have spent time in-residence with my father, discussing writing and browsing in the library late at night.

The Board of the Friends of Weymouth, the sponsoring group, was enthusiastic from the start, as was Jack Roper and the St. Andrews Press when approached about publishing the book. Poems began to arrive, many with notes telling about the importance of Weymouth to the writers. We began our search for art work, and we want to give a special thank you to the artists for all their help and cooperation. Then, one cold morning in January, Mr. Frank Fletcher called to say we had been granted money from the A.J. Fletcher Foundation. We were half the way there. In June, we were notified we had a grant from the North Carolina Arts Council and the National Endowment for the Arts. We express our sincere gratitude to these organizations.

Many people deserve our appreciation for all their help and encouragement. For permissions to reprint poems, we especially thank Dorothy Owen, Marguerite Stem, Linda Walters, R.B. Daly, and Nancy Boyd Sokoloff, daughter of James Boyd.

This book is a “thank you” from all of us who have had the privilege to be a part of the spirit and mystique of Weymouth.

—Anna-Carolyn Gilbo, Coordinating Editor

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*Emrys Journal* for "Staining the Porch Rocker" by Rebecca McClanahan Devet and "Late Snow" by Mary Kratt.

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*Mid-American Review* for "Formal Gardens" by Ann Dunn.

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The Word Works for "How To Leave A Small Town in the Dark," by Shirley G. Cochrane.

## Weymouth—A Preface

It was Paul Green as much as anyone who gave voice and support to the early efforts to preserve Weymouth. And that great man of great heart and spirit, with long ties of friendship with James and Katharine Boyd, would be proud of today's Weymouth Center for the Arts and Humanities.

Green himself was the first to pledge \$1,000 toward buying the Weymouth estate of the Boyds back from Sandhills Community College. Bob Drummond, a Moore County resident, was the first to contribute \$20,000 to the effort and later to add an equal amount to the cause.

The preservation idea itself, however, began with Elizabeth Stevenson (Buffie) Ives of Southern Pines, a longtime friend of Katharine Boyd, and she elicited the support of others to form the Friends of Weymouth.

There were many involved in the early days of the Friends of Weymouth campaign to raise \$700,000 to purchase the 215-acre estate. The list would be too long to name, but some of those who contributed time, money and energy were Ray Kotryla, Admiral I.J. Gallantin, Lena Stewart, Veronese Atkins, Capt. Sherman Betts, and others.

The purchase was made and Governor Jim Hunt came down to dedicate the Center. Many of the people in Moore County and across the state shared in the pride of the accomplishment. The Weymouth Center for the Arts and Humanities, dedicated to the creative spirit and the human aspirations for the good life—the dream of Paul Green—was a reality.

Katharine Boyd, who also had that dream and vision for her beloved Weymouth, would have been proud that day, and I think she would be proud today of not only the reality but the concept which has been maintained.

The first program to be initiated at the Weymouth Center was a writers-in-residence plan which had been proposed and endorsed by the Friends of Weymouth. It was a natural development because Weymouth had been a place of hospitality for writers in the early days of the 1920's and 1930's when James Boyd was writing his novels, short stories and poems, and helping to launch, as Jonathan Daniels insisted, the Southern Literary Renaissance. Writer friends of the Boyds such as Thomas Wolfe, F. Scott Fitzgerald, Sherwood Anderson, Maxwell Perkins, Paul Green, Lawrence Stallings, John Galsworthy, and William Faulkner came to visit, and some stayed to write.

There are many stories of lively conversations among these writers who changed and helped shape the American literary landscape of the 20th Century.

The Writers-in-Residence Program was a natural in light of that tradition, and since its beginning in 1979 some 300 writers—at first from North Carolina and now from across the nation—have shared in the creative mystique which is Weymouth.

The first Writer-in-Residence was the talented novelist and poet, the late

Guy Owen. It was a deliberate choice because the genial Guy Owen had been a strong supporter of the establishment of the Weymouth Center. He was joined in that first week of residency by poets Agnes McDonald and Betty Adcock, and they were followed by others of talent, devotion and dedication to writing. The spirit of Weymouth was catching, and some of those who came in the early days have returned to feed upon that spirit and to get the creative juices flowing again.

At the first North Carolina Poetry Festival in 1979 the hope was expressed that at some point in the future an anthology of Weymouth poetry could be published, with the poems of those who had been Writers-in-Residence, or had been leaders in literary programs at the Center, included in the book.

Through the splendid work of Anna-Carolyn Gilbo and Marsha Warren, and the cooperation of Jack Roper and the St. Andrews Press, this hope has become a reality. The Friends of Weymouth are proud to offer these collected poems of 112 poets as a monument to the spirit of Weymouth.

The book, we think, is aptly named—Weymouth.

—Sam Ragan, *Editor*



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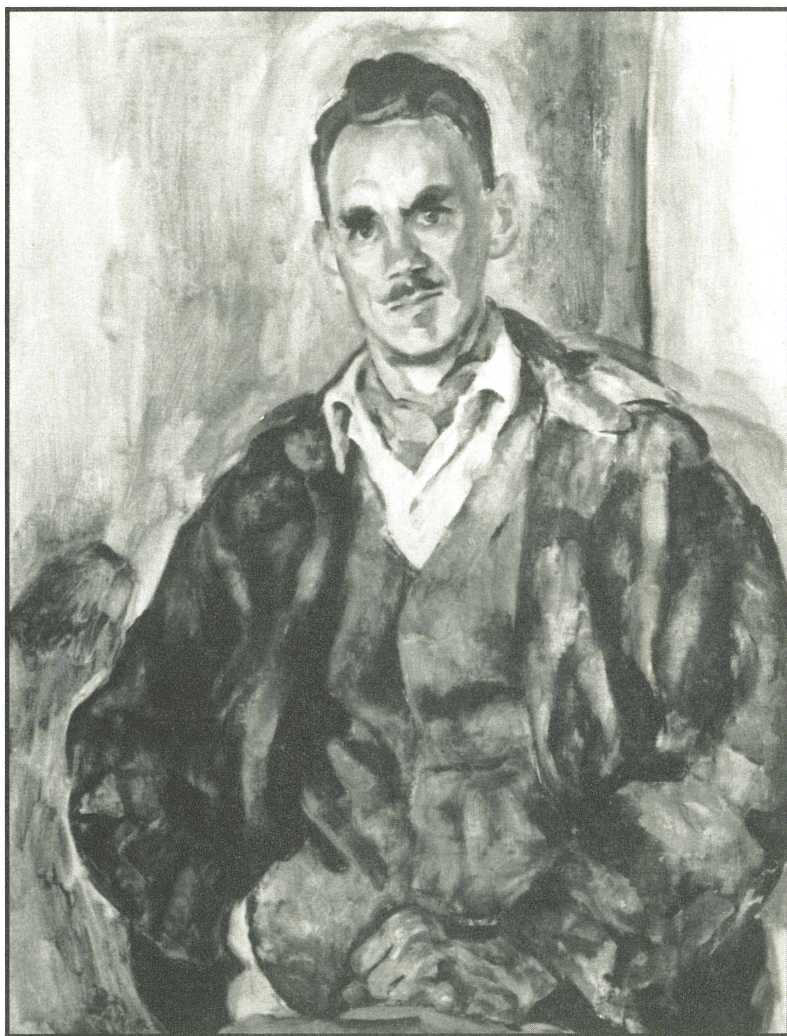
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Weymouth



*to the Boyd Family  
and the Spirit of Weymouth*



Portrait of James Boyd

oil



## Wedding Anniversary

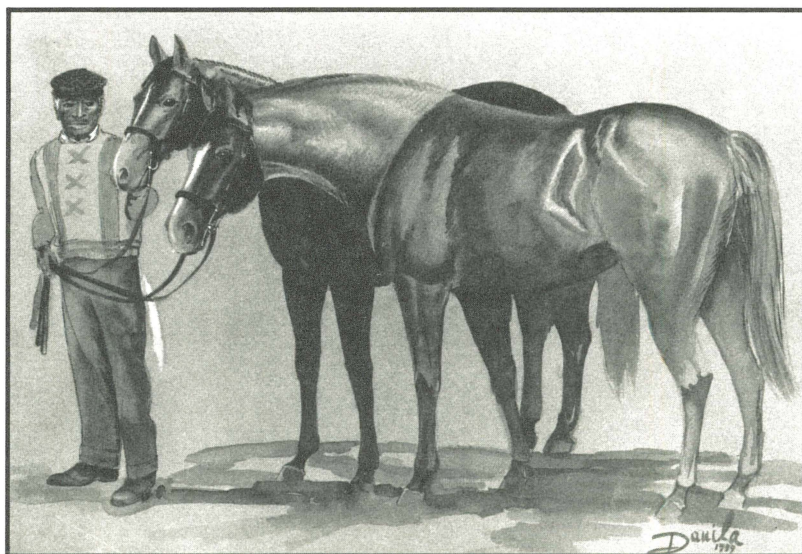
It sometimes seems as if that snowy day  
When, from your house and hill, the flying sleigh  
With silver notes bore you and me away,  
Were only just last year;  
The black trees stand so clear,  
So clear the snowy hill, the silver sleigh-bells shine,  
So warm your narrow mitten lies in mine.

But when at other times I search my heart  
And look upon my life in every part,  
I feel that you have known me from the start,  
I feel that you have known  
Years that I seemed alone,  
That in the bounty of your patient love  
There are no days of mine it knows not of.



The Weymouth Meet

watercolor



Robert with Wilbur and Sam

pen and pencil

# THE PLACE

*...in the house of thoughts and spaces*



Dogwood Blossoms

batik

## The House of Hounds' Gate

Ideas retreat down halls  
as doors hold things back;  
silent kitchens stand surprised.

I walk this new remembering  
that grows more vast at night.  
My blind feet pad to particular light,  
a small glimmering among the shadow.

In the house of  
thoughts and spaces  
rooms with windows  
and without  
open into each other;

staircases proceed up  
a scale of height,  
and small sets of steps  
lift up or let down  
two, three at a time.

Visions framed in windows  
come near the flower  
and are scratched by branches  
at the screen,

rooms empty as my brain  
where something was, or might be,  
or might have been.

## Another Weymouth April

Some years it's dogwood blossoms,  
Big as teacups,  
Challenging the postcard version.  
Some years it's wisteria  
Weaving nets  
To catch Spring...  
This year it's violets.

Violets  
Forgetting their traditional status,  
To stand daringly tall—and blue—  
Blue as the seas off Devon's cliffs  
Where violets belong,  
Where Drake and Barlow, Amadas and Raleigh,  
Looked westward.

## Respite

When all else fails,  
there is March  
to drive us mad.  
The wettest one on record.  
I am covered with mildew,  
saturated to my very soul.  
Load my car in a heavy mist.  
This is the Piedmont—the foot of the mountain  
surely, the Sandhills will have absorbed  
the overflow.  
I am a sister to the sun  
more desperate than most  
to feel its rays.  
Just south of Sanford  
the sun breaks through thinning clouds,  
I look for familiar signs—  
the road bearing to the left  
through “horse country,”  
one last turn through the gates  
(the hounds at least are there).  
From the great house,  
comes the sound of applause.  
I could make it to the concert,  
ease into the ballroom unobserved  
but the sky has cleared.  
Pollen falls over the garden—a yellow mist  
covers my sweater, burns my eyes.  
I brush it from my hair.  
No one is there to notice.  
I kneel beside the pool  
to watch the goldfish—  
reflecting.

## Formal Gardens

I.

Nothing can breathe the water lily is white with  
pink memory spiked grenade it blooms at the heart  
of sprawling consequence comfortable in dead air  
life floats on Southern afternoons I want to leap  
cover its near explosion with my belly save  
the world from its beauty become a fountain any  
act to break to make the willow move

II.

Frog squats on peripheral leaf of giant lily  
snatches at bugs with head only skilled dancer I  
move frog skin cracks through the top of its  
other atmosphere goldfish I didn't see before  
motion slides back into its shadow later  
frog is back and I know how to be still until  
there is something to move for

III.

Where you were concentric ridges smooth to glass  
so fast I can't finish thought olive to chartreuse  
the pond says I am final mystery and no surprises  
here I ask the flat eye my only question drink  
the underside of lilies and the sky even water  
bugs get yanked through the mirror by the red  
flash of fish surprise speed this side is no  
match for hunger underneath the tough old crepe  
drops another season purple fists hit the water  
with a sigh I too will leave an echo where  
I lived



## In the Thick of Night

Darkness cannot separate into parts  
as light into colors.  
Darkness is an unbroken whole  
and heavy container.

After being with great light,  
I re-enter darkness  
and cannot see where to go,  
so I remain  
listening where I cannot hide  
from finding myself.

And like any moon gathers whatever light  
can be found, wicking whatever is leftover  
in this darkness,  
I give it all back like an afterimage.

And though I change, I remain  
a moonchild,  
constant and powerless,  
compact and the same,  
pearl-small and so alone  
in this velvet denseness of night.

Summer Night

When sleep won't come,  
sit outside on terrace stoop,  
hear the tree frogs  
sing midnight cacophonies,  
accompanied by cricket chorus  
and soft percussions—  
willows sweeping,  
rustled by a restless wind.

When sleep won't come,  
walk around this sprawling house  
on gentle paths  
and watch a radiant half-moon  
climbing, climbing slowly up  
through the branches of a pine  
to the top, then pulling free  
like some glowing, graceful dove.

When sleep won't come,  
find a place by pillared porch,  
listen, then, for the ghosts  
of Thomas Wolfe, Paul Green, the ones  
who walked by night when sleep came hard,  
and watched this moon,  
this Weymouth moon.

## Windows at Weymouth

A white rose flakes where it crept to bloom  
inside on the window sill in a dark hall.  
Far away—orange blossoms—sweet on the air.

Glass ripples, waves over the eighty-one  
latticed places that enclose us, the arches,  
bays, rectangles we look in, look out of....

Gothic panes reveal lavender, twin iris the color  
of eyes. Yellow roses drape the old brick wall,  
the stuccoed pool room, the pebbled lotus pond.

We want to be close to the iris, lavender tufted,  
yellow throats—to think those paper-thin folds  
enclose the ruffles, veins, fuzz of the full-blown ones.

Cherry trees, bowing in rows, grace the lawn  
like skirts, like picture hats. A man named Green  
keeps pushing back the forest, holding the woods.

In the holly tree a frantic brown cardinal  
guards her rusted eggs. Red lover, green worm  
painted against the pines—and the dogwood dying.

Eighty-one places frame this and that—  
the silver-haired one on the veranda, the one  
typing in the garden. The ones we only know about

from sweaters left in closets, notes in mirrors,  
saw in these sashed casements—shuttered, shuddered.  
And we want to picture things as if seen

through windows. Two women sit on bricks  
in sunlight, and it's terrible looking through  
these windows at people crying....

Glass waves, ripples over eighty-one arched,  
bayed, sashed, splayed, latticed places where we  
look in, look out. We enclose them.

## Storm Over Weymouth

In this historic house of Weymouth, thunder  
vibrates from all directions  
ricochets among the pines.  
Working on poems with a friend  
we see lightning careen from the sky  
the splitting and splintering  
of the sun in the night.  
In thunderstorms, I remember, my mother  
often carried a feather pillow.

After storm rides over  
we open doors, return to our poems.  
Cool air floods in with call of the cicadas.  
Frogs marshal quavering voices  
They are blooming in the garden  
They are blooming in the night  
Cicadas and frogs waken the dark.  
Their rhythms like cadences of poems  
we may not achieve.  
Our sleep is attuned to their throbbing.

At morning light by wing of the house  
we find a loblolly pine  
slashed and ringed with gashes  
the ground fragmented with bark.  
I peel off the wet cambium pieces  
and wring them like leather.  
The day, as before,  
endures the hot, dry winds of summer  
and tremors a rhythmical phrase.  
The sun is as ever,  
but we know the sun splintered in the night.

## Narrative

What I am telling you now  
moves and must always be moving  
so that  
if it is in the kitchen it must be drifting  
out into the hall and up the long stair as  
far perhaps as the attic where it must  
float out toward the mountain where a fine lady  
perhaps is waiting

Yes what I am telling you now is climbing the steep side  
and  
an hour perhaps will do it  
to the top where the lady is waiting

For why would I tell you that which I tell you  
were there not always this movement  
this  
drifting out from the attic unto the mountain  
and up the steep side  
for  
were there not always this movement you would be bored  
and drumming the kitchen table  
but  
because you are hearing this drifting you are now listening  
waiting

## Overheard at a Wedding: Weymouth

Ordinarily his words would not rise, being leaden  
but on this wedding day there is weightlessness:  
champagne, balloons, the trill of wine-soaked laughter  
the sum of all the suns of all May brides ever  
distilled like cognac, bright & crisp as mint.

But the German bartender is serious today.  
He will have the college kid turn the greasy ball  
of the Third Reich over again & again  
while they snap the beer tins & pop champagne  
dispense scotch, & scotch with a splash, & scotch with a twist.  
His voice urges: *Wrestle the deep Jew;*  
*run east of every place you've ever been.*  
"Laura" melts from the ballroom; a snare thumps like a cardboard box.

In the corner room unscreened I type;  
the machine murmurs continuo to the glitter of laughter;  
the guttural immediacy of the closest voice.  
The German hails independent political conscience—  
the greasy ball is string soaked in my own fat.  
I am a voyeur with thin skin.

A winter poem is making itself out of this May day  
Oriental, tightly wrought, gossamer—a landscape  
etched cold with old fear and forgotten.

I am like the German: Dachau prisoner of what I've read  
and dreamed. We, two, alone at this wedding  
still hunt for the lost who chant in the marsh  
listen for the lost who pray in the wet wood.  
This fear we have wilts and must be hurriedly tossed  
like a bridal bouquet.

Late Snow

But why  
when it came,  
snow all day,  
did the full-flowering trees,  
those April fools,  
catch most of it,  
bend  
and break,  
the more in bloom  
the more severe the damage,  
lost,  
gone,  
given away.



## Weymouth

Softly,  
a scent of pine  
needles the Georgian house,  
while wisps of words roam the hallways  
and wait.

## Shelby at Weymouth

Eyes flash  
fingers run through red hair  
a quick grin covers his candid face.

He leads listeners from high-ceilinged rooms  
across pine-needled lawns  
away from tall houses and concrete.  
We follow him  
to a loamy tobacco farm  
and he's in the middle of his poem.  
With Spring in his face  
he relives the life...  
pulls yellow lugs, waters sweaty mules  
at noon, strums his guitar at sundown,  
as drying leaves whiff the air.

With eyes closed  
he runs again the path to the creek  
hooks the cat-fish  
hears his line sing...lands him!  
    A barefoot boy with cool  
    green moss between his toes.

## At Weymouth Stables

Under the eye  
of the black iron rider  
on the black iron horse atop the cupola,  
past the bright new padlock  
on the tack room door,  
over the jagged, splintered sill  
and in through the open window

I climb  
around the shards of broken glass  
and onto the cracked cement.

Empty now the stalls, and quiet,  
their earthen floors criss-crossed  
in the patterns of old rake marks.  
The corner stall, its hard earth rounded  
in three uneven hollows,  
breathes the presence of the old stallion,  
who lay and listened, lay and finally  
found his recognizable truths  
in the blue yell of sky  
and green scream of pine

beyond.

## How to Leave a Small Town in the Dark

The train is the best way to go  
even though it leaves at six a.m.  
You can walk to the station—  
again, the best way. Move  
through patches of dark  
into patches of light.

Those shapes that loom close  
to the fence are horses.  
In daylight they turn away  
when you speak. In dark  
they protect you. And then  
you step into light.  
The next dark spot  
is straight road  
until you get to town.

At least once, a dark figure  
may come toward you  
but he will say  
*Good morning*, reminding you  
this is not night. What harm  
can befall you in a place  
where the railroad track runs  
through the middle of town?

You are safe—see ahead  
the depot lights. Inside,  
the benches of childhood  
await you. Sit quietly—  
wait for the train whistle  
that has shaped  
your morning dreams.

## Autumn Morning Reverie

This sun dapples a pattern  
through thinning leaves,  
and lights the edges of the breeze.

That sun warmed my fingers and face,  
and made lazy promises.

This sun turns green to gold,  
and gold to brown.

That sun woke sleeping buds  
into riots of color,  
and made all things possible.

This sun reminds me of the date,  
and tells me to hurry.

That sun smiled encouragement,  
and said to take my time.

This sun hides,  
then peers out to caution me  
to burrow into a quiet cocoon  
and wait again for

—that sun.

Late Afternoon Thunderstorm in the Carolinas

What cosmic vandalism  
toppled those two  
venerable white oaks,  
shaking the dead  
from their sleep,  
toppling slate roofs  
on their chalky heads,  
leaving only a grey  
squirrel to run  
chattering along  
the fallen trunks  
while the cross  
on the steeple  
tilts askew  
against the afternoon sky?



Southern Pines Depot

photo illustration



Bound North

---

The Silver Star  
echoes its way north  
through Southern Pines  
each morning at 7:56  
glides down the main street  
past horse farms  
virgin pines  
pecan groves  
moans through the same state  
where bloodhounds once  
sniffed slaves  
down from trees  
out of hay wagons and barns  
before they could get  
underground.

## The Rimland

In the resinous forest  
a thin snake,  
a strip of braided beauty,  
threads its way,  
black on brown,  
through the pine needles.  
Where the path breaks  
blackberry bushes,  
muscadine vines  
grow tangled.  
This pasture is rinsed  
in sunlight.  
Every blade stands  
separate.  
A woodpecker  
sets off a thrumming  
steady and insistent  
as the heart.  
How thin, I think,  
the membrane between  
despair and joy.

## Weymouth Rhapsodie

Debussy's turn-of-the-century  
concert piece,  
the autumn garden,  
Monet's shadowy Morning Mist,  
a thunderstorm gathering—  
liquid fragments of melody  
crash like sheets of glass,  
intermittent sunlight  
intruding, iridescent  
splashes bouncing  
off a dappled fountain bowl  
filled with light.

Late afternoon concert,  
sunrays slanting across the lawn,  
low to the horizon,  
transform November pine-needle  
greens and browns to gold.  
Two pre-teen riders, velvet helmeted,  
walk their horses across the meadow,  
girls, and horses, too,  
deep in conversation, unknowingly  
involved in the rhapsodie.

## Weymouth Bath

It's old-timey.  
Let the brown water run  
Until clear.

No shower here.  
Take a quart kitchen pot  
For rinsing.

The water's hot.  
Four quarts rinse the soapsuds,  
Two the sand.

Shiver and stand.  
Put your clothes on faster  
Than you planned.

## The Herb Lady of Weymouth

She dug her bony fingers into winterhard earth  
I'll plant alyssum here, she said  
And there I'll plant some marigolds  
You can't see it, but beneath these weeds  
There's a garden waiting to be reborn  
I'll put a border of bricks around it  
You won't recognize this place next spring  
I'm just an old woman who lives alone  
Not much good to anyone  
But I love to make things grow.

## Weymouth Interlude

A train croons in the night—  
not far, not near,  
a cricket's at the door,  
hounds bark not far away.  
Cool air sweeps through screens  
    of hallways, rooms, and doors.  
No other sounds intrude.

A pauper may be king where pine trees rule  
and Weymouth lends the grace in house and land.  
No hours here demand attention to a chore,  
no classes to attend nor meetings chair.

Time's segments do not interrupt  
    a train of thought:  
night and day—morning, evening, afternoon—  
    any could be now.  
One continuous flow of time, marked only  
    by arrive and leave,  
is before me here. There is a feeling  
of limitlessness of time  
    in large, but limited, space.

Where time flow is so strong, space limits  
    seem unreal.

I shall move in and out for six brief days—  
    and spend a lifetime  
in futile attempts  
to regain  
the Weymouth experience.

## Rooms

"My room" at Weymouth  
Overlooks a garden  
Of herbs and iris  
Where partridges bob and bow  
Along the paths  
Like buxom ladies in a courtly dance,  
Where trees have doors  
Which open only at the touch  
Of gnomes at night,  
And where quite mortal poets  
Sit among the blooms  
And pen immortal verse  
In rainbow hues.

Whatever else shall be  
"My room"  
Among the promised "many"  
In my next abode,  
I hope one window will look out  
Upon a garden  
Where "bob whites" bow and bob,  
Where gnomes have homes,  
Where poets sit 'mid prised light  
And sing about the cosmos  
In one flower.



## Save the Pines

I dwell among the oaks, which at this meridian  
go bare, beginning in late August,  
making a clutter in the walkways  
until the last dead leaf is ejected  
by spring green.

I rue the loss of pines to the pine bark beetle....  
It has some obscure Latin name, of course,  
but by whatever name, it kills;  
its guerrilla army invades under cover of bark,  
and chokes off the food supply.

By the time I'm aware that something's amiss,  
the tree is dying,  
and the beetles have moved on to another victim,  
unheard, unseen, except by birds,  
of whom there are not enough to combat the menace.

Yes, I rue the loss of pines  
for I am living as best I can  
in The Pine State,  
where the long leaves, needles, tags, or trash  
descend as noiselessly as the beetles,  
throughout the year,  
but always in balance  
so that the image is forever green,  
and growing.

Tree Felled at the Corner of Bennett and Connecticut

---

It was at least a yard and a half in diameter,  
level to the ground as power saws could make it.  
The remains of the giant oak, fresh cut, live white,  
smelled of wood working shops and of lumber yards.  
More than that, it smelled of hurricane Hazel  
breaking the drought, of twelve inch snow  
setting a record, coming like white magic  
to show folks how to stop, of the house  
across the street burning in the night  
sending occupants next door for shelter.  
It smelled of cool shade, lemonade, swings  
sang with the wind and with wrens. Somewhere  
in a labyrinth of branches, the homeplace  
of generations of squirrels clung weathered.  
Now level to the ground, a stepping stone to nowhere  
while the fresh cut sweet mash smell still lingers  
we'll read history in the air.  
When the new white cut fades to earth shade  
we'll read it noble as a grave ledger.

## Breakdown

Like a gyro  
in a cage of  
brittle bones  
the thought  
chases itself  
around, I want  
to go outside  
outside, outside.

The long windows look  
upon a field of chopped  
corn stalks holding  
fall plowed earth down.  
Little cars hurry on the  
highway, the scene could  
use a splash of red, a  
cardinal on the wing. A  
flare of light on the  
hearth would be welcome.

Icicles in the arteries of  
the mind begin to melt, a  
slow trickle of thaw. I heard  
shots awhile ago. Someone wants  
to stop the motion of living  
things and I am not ready to  
be mistaken for a bird in flight.  
I could take a walk if only I  
could take the safety of the  
walls with me.

I think you think my thoughts  
but, I am unable to think yours.  
Will you miss me if I go out  
into the glare of sunlight or  
just one day realize that the  
silence has taken  
a different tone?

## On Keeping Abreast of Things

Now that it seems like Spring  
keep me a breast  
tell me where the flowers are  
when the willows bend  
keep me in lavender  
keep telling me  
there's room for me  
in places where the red bud blooms.

I need to cancel  
doom and blood,  
need to know  
where blossoms break,  
when Spring blows home again,  
I want to see earth  
crack wide as your eyes  
when love arrests.

So keep in touch  
keep touching me  
and most of all:

keep me a breast.

**ICE GARDENS** 1984 ANN LISTOKIN || Dedicated to Weymouth Center

VIOLIN AND PIANO

Weymouth Ice Gardens for piano and violin

A Party for the N.C. Symphony  
(For Rose Barlow)

After the last long note,  
the musicians move through the pines  
no less musically than the symphony,  
the concerto, the quartet.  
I sit sewing threads of my heart,  
hoping they'll hold, not tear.  
The performers laugh, a little giddy  
with wine, the harvest moon, a place to play.  
They touch off chords of another music.  
My heartstrings quiver  
with threads and shards of thought,  
difficult to manage,  
easy to lose.

Communion

For most of my life  
on such weighty matters  
as God or No-God  
I've remained a fence-sitter.

But last October  
while walking  
the pine-needle paths  
of Weymouth  
an intoxicating scent  
lured me to purple miracles.

Kneeling there  
I sampled one, then another  
proclaimed the muscadine *divine*.

## Up the Watertower, Halfway

Tuesday I decided I was fearless  
and to prove it I climbed up the watertower  
halfway.

No one was around when I crossed the field full of sand spurs and  
climbed over the barbed wire fence.

A sunny fall afternoon, I should be able to see quite far.

I promised myself secret rewards for climbing past my fear.

Reaching to hold the ladder, which began ten feet from the  
ground, I said this is easy.

But a third of the way up I began my old refrain—

What if I fall?

I tightened my hold and went two more rungs.

I tightened my hold even more, so tight I could go no further.

Looking around, but not at the ground, I congratulated myself  
for climbing higher than ever before.

Going all the way to the top just to prove it to me was silly.

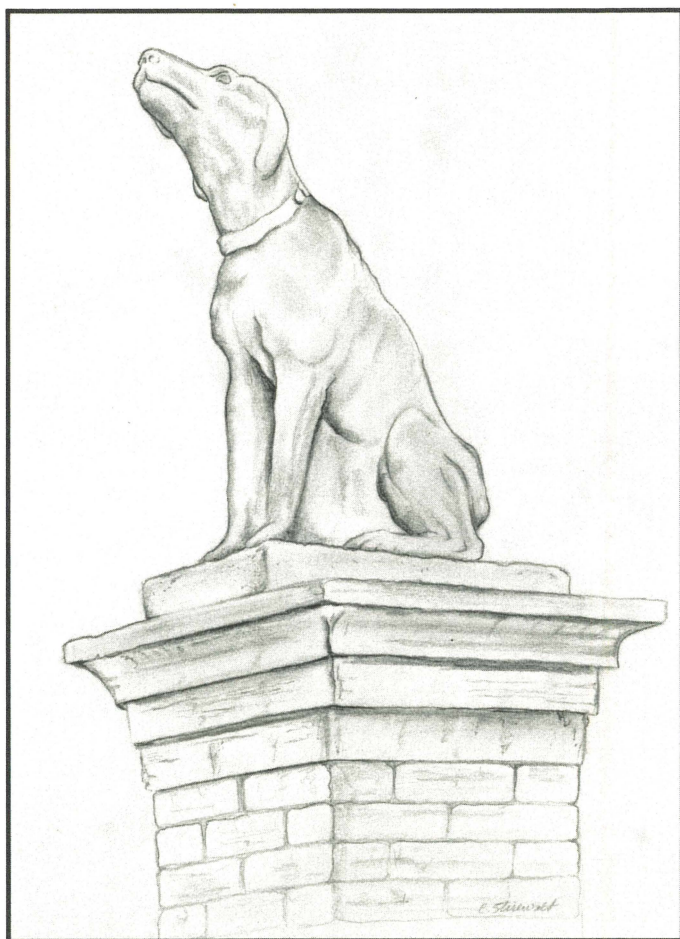
Why not not do it, but say I did? Only I would know I did only  
half. No one was around to encourage me, no one was around  
to look good for, so while still looking up, I climbed down.

And now I think that if all the climbing I did—  
up halfway and down halfway—had all been up,  
I'd be on top of that watertower still.

If I were

I hope you'd have missed me by now.





Original Moore County Hound

pencil

Beneath the Slate Roof

At night  
I close my eyes  
and see  
the hounds of stone  
leap down  
desert their posts.  
They chase  
through virgin pines  
to bay at shadows  
in the fields  
while in my room  
beneath the slate  
I summon Wolfe, Fitzgerald, Boyd  
and all the spirits  
of the house:  
Come, touch  
my dark,  
my waiting pen.

Breakfast and After at Weymouth

On a day of rain and roses  
that throb like pulses  
among grackles and thrushes,  
through the glass of doorfans  
like breeze-blown pools, I watch  
pines scatter yarrow  
and hawkweed, pennycress  
and shepherd's purse, to where  
mirages of mist and meadow  
joust, curtsey, dance reels,  
raise tents for shows. As a child  
all people of earth filed past me,  
Breugel faces staring at every turn.

We are each performers in the next year's play  
a scrap of red  
a hand waving  
a tune for a crude madrigal.

Written at a Country Mansion of the 1920's, Now  
Partially Restored as a Retreat for Poets

Our shoes clamor in empty chambers,  
room after room, and the sunlight's  
whole animal is asleep on bare floors.  
Beyond the undraped windows, gardens crouch  
deranged beneath their wild invaders.  
Only the high pines and the willows  
have kept to their places under the sky.  
The vast hollows of the house whine, beginning  
to know they will be filled.

It is impossible not to imagine the past here,  
its cliches of pleasure: how the articulate  
guests dropped their shoes on Aubussons  
in the quiet hour, dressing for dinner,  
those evenings that arrived in their best,  
their ice-clear stars.  
Horses sighed in the stables,  
water in the pool, flame on the candles.

As if things were simple.

For you who raised this house, I cast  
a time more yellow with summer than ours,  
an ease even you could not have known you owned.  
And I give you power's inevitable daydream:  
a pause, say, after luncheon when murmurs  
of servants had diminished, when the guests  
had gone each to his right train.  
You are gazing at a wedge of sun  
breaking on a polished table-edge  
when it comes, the sudden bad moment,  
and you think of your heart as the air  
races with invisible wheels, a feeling like war  
or worse, in a flood of unfurnishing light.  
Might the word *thieves* have drifted on your lips,  
some wish to refurbish the locks, a whisper  
directed to no one?

In that moment before you blinked away  
erasure, before you woke wholly to the afternoon's  
cut flowers, the mirrors, the folded headlines  
from Europe, a hand across your eyes—  
you might have guessed, almost,  
the longleaf pines around this house the last  
of their thousand mile forest,  
the light changed into *future*, the workings of light  
become knowledge toward holocaust.  
You might have seen us, strangers flickering  
dark here, darker. And the whippoorwill  
practicing a dying art.

---

# THE SPIRIT

*...only the weave of wind and word*



Evening Star

watercolor

## So Much Depends

After it leaves the pines  
tonight the wind holds  
its swishing sigh  
reaches eaves  
and windows of Weymouth.  
Now and then our owl  
is answered  
by artillery that shakes  
old timbers, shatters  
bits of poems.

Windsong, bird of prey, mock  
war— a descant trio pulls  
against silken twitch of words  
blindstitch in fleeting grasp.

Owl deftly lifts his small  
catch, soldiers are ferried  
toward sleep. Now  
only the weave of wind and word.



## In the Best Circles

Dappled morning light, surf sound stirred  
in pines, a mourning dove's insistent call,  
boys' faces looking from their frames  
into 1932, a window  
shade-pull shadow's perfect round swayed  
along the polished, wide-board floor: Weymouth  
encircles the pregnant past, welcomes the future.

Globes of marigolds mound along the walkways,  
old boxwoods scent the patterned garden angles  
where old-fashioned herbs are newly planted:  
rue (with which "our hearts are laden"), hyssop  
for our bruises, lemon thyme, and lavender.

The Boyd family's hospitality,  
spread in widening circles of friends who loved  
the weather of this place: boys and horses,  
roses, acres of virgin pines, good food  
and talk of books to weave the canon round.

Now their heirs, no blood kin, descend  
past staircase fanlights, open French  
doors from library and dining room, new guests  
visiting the past, spreading circles of friends.

## Splitting Wood

The wedge centers on the wood.  
The hammer lifts back high  
against a November morning:  
then he brings it down  
as if the hammer knows.

I hear the echo  
and move to the window  
to watch another work:  
the log I couldn't roll  
splits evenly. Next year,  
it will flame out of  
a cold beauty.

Returning to my work, I lift  
a delicate page, looking  
for the center and  
a place to mark it. My heart beats  
as rapidly as any woodsman's:  
my hands grow stronger,  
and my face is hot.

A Week at Weymouth

Funny,  
I had thought this place  
to be a retreat  
silent  
the only sounds  
perhaps that of  
magnolias dripping,  
or longleaf pines  
letting loose their needles.  
What I hadn't counted on  
was the nightly clacking,  
the ghost of Jim Boyd  
alive at the typewriter.  
And furthermore  
ducking the downright regular  
hailstorm:  
poems falling from the sky.

Now We Are  
One of Them

Along so many wooden ways they move—  
through halls and doors, up stairs and down—  
all those minds in the monastic night.

A cough,  
a sigh,  
paper crumpling—  
and then the day, left to us.

To awaken here is the thing:  
A buzz breeze wafts upward  
a morning call of pines,

naming us,  
one by one, now  
of Weymouth.

A Note to James Boyd—Spring, 1985

Mohawk drums long ago fell silent,  
as have you, too, my good unseen host.  
I half think that if I suddenly turn,  
I will see your fleeting shadow on a wall  
or hear your sibilant whisper of greeting  
on the vernal breeze that wafts a window curtain  
like the white locks of a patriarch, at home.

Today, I addressed the gold crocus,  
early scout clearing the way  
for the tribe of blooms that will come after,  
when Carolina April occupies your lawn.  
And I leaned, to glimpse my likeness, in your pond  
and saw a man older than I knew,  
as though you might have looked  
across my shoulder; when I whirled  
no ghost was there, only your huge house  
where you lived in peace so many years.

When I paced the bridle paths  
among the quiet pines, head cocked  
like an alert squirrel on guard, I fantasized  
I heard the swish of footsteps close behind,  
companion to my peaceful walk.  
But I was daydreaming; caught up  
in the sweet security of early spring,  
I knew I was alone with deep joy  
that I could embrace this brooding place  
with affection for the setting and the past  
and for you, my most hospitable host.  
Permit me to thank you, Sir, for all this:  
for your kind consideration in leaving  
your world for others to enjoy,  
and for having even me, across the years,  
as your most appreciative guest, today.

A Week at Weymouth

1.

I carry my Royal over the threshold,  
lay it on the spread bed, say,  
*Be fruitful and multiply.*

2.

Faced with a single outlet,  
which would Chekhov choose:  
music, light, or the word?

3.

PLEASE DO NOT SNEAK POEMS INTO ROOMS  
AS THEY TEND TO ATTRACT VERMIN.

4.

A venerable abbot in a bowtie  
comes to me in a dream, and says,  
“You may walk in the walled garden  
and crush one herb on each finger—  
but please, pluck no fruits or flowers.  
Birds will minister to you in your cell,  
bring fresh gossip and weather reports.  
They are such perfect barometers!”

5.

Double shifts at the blank desk  
cancelled with caffeine,  
phases of a dark moon.

I harvest fatigue like a tenant—  
backstrain, grotesque tics,  
hand cramps, fingers barely able  
to grip another stalk or leaf.

6.

I can't sleep so I count bombs  
exploding in pillows of sand  
at the nearby camp, a drumbeat  
ruthless as the heart in my ear.

7.

Driving out, the days align:  
legal sheet and longleaf pine.

Two Poems from a Journal

---

*Praise*

This stands for praise—  
A book of days  
Of frozen terror,  
Scalded nights,  
The horn of healing,  
Tethered flights  
To follow that  
Tall muffled light:  
Whatever name  
It wills to bear.

*Again*

*Praise?*—this mountain bursting my back,  
Blundering out toward day and light  
Through me, the space I've fought to hold—  
Clear of pain, secure for rest:  
One evening glide toward tranquil night?

*Pain.* Labor. The birth-throes of death—  
Mine, for me. Selected by what  
Or whom? Sent why?

The source and socket  
Of end and start.

What else? *Praise.*



## Under the Dog Star

Weymouth hounds roam at night,  
leap down from their pedestals  
with a dancer's grace. I sit  
in the great room and watch  
them frolic like puppies on  
the sculptured lawn. They circle  
the pool, startling the frogs,  
drink water with greedy gulps.  
With muzzles dripping, they mark  
the boundary between yard  
and deep wood. I hear them  
pant as they trot by.  
In that still moment before dawn,  
before birds rustle and chirp,  
they settle into formal posture  
on the pedestals and  
wait for the day.

Ghosts, Past and Present

She stands in shadow near the stables  
witnessing nocturnal rituals—

Two gatepost hounds cat-leap to ground,  
stalk woods, gardens, pool, hypnotize  
hapless stone creatures caught between them,  
sniff out secrets as hounds are born to do.

Horses, manes and tails stretched straight  
by the wind, kick up sand along the drive  
with coltish hooves. Tiring, they seek  
their stalls, munching, crunching,  
stomping, settling down.

Hounds nuzzle stall to stall,  
back away, hackles rising  
and, stone eyes iced with tears,  
return to guard duty.

She is free, now, to roam the house.  
Entering the usual way she hovers above  
the silent piano; fingers lightly travel keys,  
brush walls, touch cherished trophies.  
Riffling pages she drops a book called DRUMS....

In a lighted room above the kitchen  
where servants once slept, typing ceases;  
a writer, heart-in-mouth, tilts his head,  
listens, shrugs wry shoulders,  
resumes tapping out a fantasy:

She watches ten blooded horses,  
manes and tails flying in the wind,  
clip-clop hollow hooves in concert  
with echoes of baying and whinnying  
in empty stables....

3 A.M.

Gliding around a  
curve, my life—  
that looms out with the car's  
lean and pull—does not  
swing back  
plumb, but floats just  
outside my seated self. I  
hover, fluttering  
against lives  
and landscapes.

This August night's  
star-pricked blue dissolves  
all but the starkest  
distinctions of day. Thrown against  
hillsides, pockets of  
lights mirror the wide  
sky. Outlines of closer  
towns, horses, silos, pines  
are too  
fine. The blue  
unity is all. With  
a distant blue belief  
I make  
my way, lulled  
by plats and specks of  
insects breaking  
on the windshield.

## Calling Captain

Captain. Here, Captain. Come here, suh.  
You seen a hound dog with a tan patch  
Just here on his left eye?  
One of Mr. Jim Boyd's favorite hounds. Run off this morning.  
If Mr. Jim was home now, this thing never would have happened.  
He can take all forty of those dogs,  
Take them walking right down the middle of Broad Street.  
One strays the least little bit,  
All he has to do is call that dog by name,  
It steps right back in line, pretty as you please.

You. Captain. I ain't got time to fool with you.  
Somebody's got to get back there and start cooking.  
Those big-time writers sure can eat.  
Course, Mr. Anderson, he's not much trouble.  
Spends most of his time at the tracks with the horses, you know.  
But that Mr. Wolfe.  
I've never seen a man could talk so.  
Supper be turning stone cold on his plate,  
And still he's going on,  
Words just pouring out his mouth  
Like water out a spout.

Oh, there's always a big commotion up at the house.  
Miz Katharine and her workmen.  
Knocking down walls, adding a bathroom, making a hall.  
And Mr. Jim Boyd kicks up a monstrous ruckus every morning when  
he writes.  
Course, it's his secretary who puts down the words.  
She's pretty quiet most likely.  
But Mr. Jim, he starts at one end of that long study  
And walks to the other,  
Back and forth, back and forth,  
Dictating all the time, you know—  
And he wears his hunting boots!

You. Captain. Get over here, suh.  
How come you to act such a way?

## Haunted

The birds that sing the morning in recall  
the days, the nights, slow motion dawn to dawn.  
This manor, framed by undulating lawn,  
by sculptured hedges, iris marching tall,  
once knew a time unhurried, sweet and slow.  
The house is haunted by the long ago.

The terraces still wait for tea and scones.  
The library still holds a ghostly trace  
of brandy and cigars. The fireplace  
hides ghosts of pine logs in its blackened stones.  
The Great Room's polished parquet floors recall  
the monthly musicales, the Annual Ball.

Upstairs the ghosts of laughing children hide.  
So many stairs! I count three flights in all—  
two narrow ones, the stairs in the front hall  
are wide and gracious, perfect for a bride.  
When French doors let the Jasmine breezes in,  
the chandeliers start chiming Lohengrin.

The servants' wing is empty now. To reach  
the narrow rooms, you go up narrow stairs,  
down narrow halls, to find two chairs,  
a single bed, one chest of drawers in each.  
The kitchen bells keep calling down below:

*"acres of lawn to mow  
trees to prune, hedges to trim  
sterling to polish and put away  
ten beds to make  
eight baths to clean  
the dining room seats twelve  
the Great Room, thirty-five  
—eighty, if buffet..."*

The ghosts of bells keep ringing down below  
—summoning, summoning. Hurry, hurry ...go!

## Weymouth

We have left traces of ourselves  
in the old house, a strand of hair,  
a finger nail on the tile,  
scent of jasmine oil in the striped room  
where I would give you dawn in the Sandhills—  
movement of light leaping the pines,  
my pen sparking stars.  
I write myself into the desk by the window,  
overlook the boxwood maze and fragrant herbs below.

What faces have gazed into the hidden mirror  
in the top bureau drawer? I tweeze my brows  
and wonder at my heroine—should she tweeze hers?  
I am the hunter now, finding bones  
of the past hidden in the sounds  
of drawers gliding, chairs sliding at a banquet set  
in photographs that hang in the hall of Weymouth.  
The study is filling up with past lives of poets  
who have left their skins behind, their books,  
like wild animals leave traces of themselves.

Here the woods swell with words,  
the notes of September birds; October's  
spice-brown leaves like gloves,  
catch falling needles from a crisper air.  
It is a place washed clean  
by a week full of rain.  
Now the marigolds hold light,  
the lily-pads dazzle the frog.  
Sun brings old shadows into play  
as the house widens with the day.

I pursue the ghosts, with intent to converse  
one night, only to find feathers flying  
and the folding flight of a moth.  
By rights I am just a visitor here,  
a trace of what has been,  
come to Weymouth for the path within.

The Life I've Made

The sound of silverware  
Being sorted floats  
Through the spring air  
Like one of those past lives  
I never led:  
Such grace!  
And I am up here in my room  
Practicing the languages  
Of the silent, no notion  
Of what to say to anyone.  
Tonight they're calling  
For soft breezes, moon,  
A shower of meteors,  
Enough air to clatter  
The blinds like bones  
As I lie in the dark  
Of the life I've made.

TO OPEN my self  
on paper,  
I pull me  
into a closed ball,  
tangle arms  
around warm knees,  
and only then  
unfold my mind  
into poetry.



Poet

(Procrastinator or masochist?)

Tiny needles sting  
Inside my head  
As I drive my day onward—  
A sandspur catching  
In tender folded velvet,  
Relentless captive,  
Finally victorious,  
Plucked painfully,  
Freed in verse.

Weymouth—the Boyds—and the Transmigration of Energy

Ghosts inspire the writer's muse  
As James types a staccato tune  
And Katharine hums her melody.

Like the prickly cones of the long-leaf pine,  
The seeds of the mind expand with new births,  
And creative surges feed the soul.

Fresh words sing from the spirit  
To form realities shaped in black and white,  
While the writer forges the chain of continuity.

Summer Nights at Weymouth  
(For Sam Ragan)

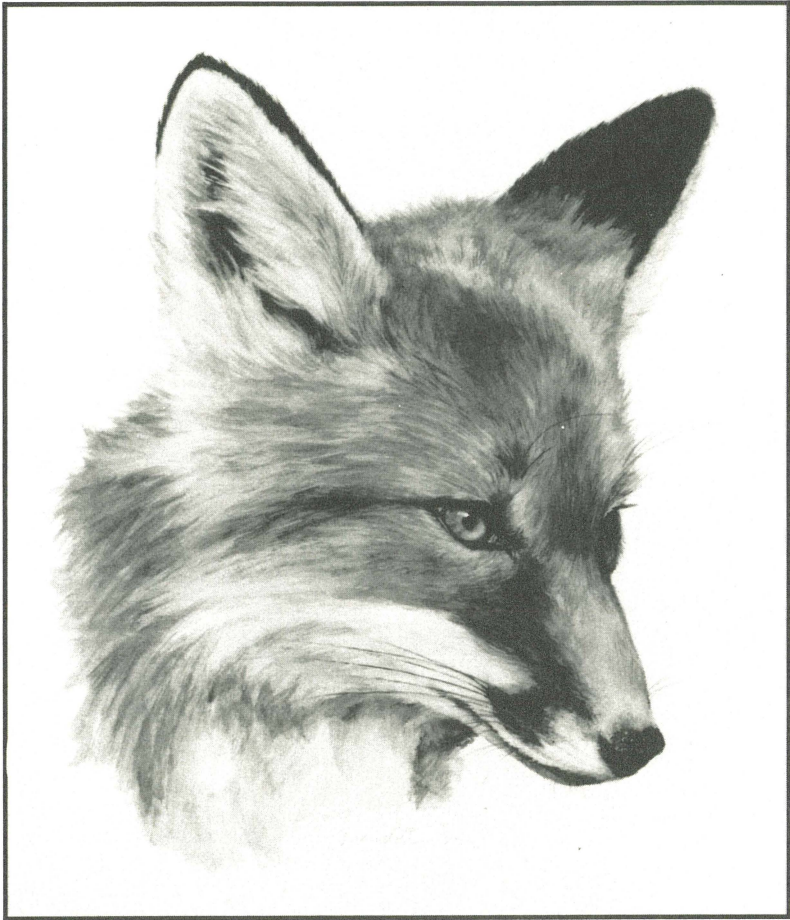
Silence sings along cool darkened halls.  
The house begins to speak: popping floorboards  
Creak beneath bare feet. Sometimes an elusive word  
Breaks barriers of distant years, snapping death's shackles  
In the next room—a snatch of lost melody,  
Fragmented sentences still unfinished,  
The whisper of prayers cut short.  
Here night is a woman wearing moonlight.  
Her skirts drag over the terrace,  
Gleam through the iris beds. The trailing hem  
Threads through the boxwoods, rustling  
Over each twisting path. Life is like this:  
A garden maze we, pondering, wandering, puzzle out,  
Quilting together unexpected turns,  
Curves sudden and sharp as the new moon's horns.  
Some gnostics insist it does not matter  
Which road we choose, if we journey its full length,  
Allow our hearts to guide, let hearts  
Be nests and love another road we follow out  
With faithful feet. We travel sometimes together  
And mostly alone, grateful that every road  
Brings us back to the garden where startled nightbirds  
Break the cathedral hush with drowsy half-notes.  
I go inside, mount the stairs slowly.  
The moon left her billowing gown behind  
Draped over the bannister railing,  
Dropped in drifts of luminous haste on the bed's footboard.  
Sleep washes in warm rich waves of gladness  
Discovering darkness is me, a dreaming woman  
Naked and flowering in the summer night.

Beyond the Dream

---

You and I riding an updraft,  
soaring on outstretched wings,  
moving in perfect symmetry  
to the sound of silence—no  
end and no beginning,  
no take-off or landing  
with awkward wings, unsteady  
feet—only an outflowing  
past known horizons, powered by  
crystal light from eyes  
meeting and holding course  
together, till time again  
is before, and silence after.

Effortless the parting—as if  
overtones once heard  
would sound for ever.



Male Fox

acrylic

## The Silent Chase

Quiet are the hounds of Weymouth.  
Calmly they watch the people enter.  
Promptly they catch the scent of a novice  
and the chase begins. It's a strange pursuit,  
not the noisy tracking of one who runs,  
nor yet the busy sniffing of trails to find  
one freshly made by likely game.  
This prey is unaware of the hounds  
that follow like soft shadows,  
secretly spreading a spell  
that charms the heart  
among tall trees, trim shrubs,  
bewitching flowers radiating light,  
and fellowship of kindred minds,  
past and present, who gather in these  
spacious halls to share their muses.  
Lithe with life, the hounds of Weymouth stalk  
their victims over field and thicket:  
they nudge, tug and draw them back  
to the place they guard.

The Holiest of Holies

Scales removed,  
the light sears.  
The holiest of holies  
is truth.

Myths told over and over,  
believed:  
Savored morsels  
nourishing the sinew of the will,  
The dark side of Shekinah  
cloaking reality—  
admired as love in all its blindness.

Myths must die.  
Close the lid on them.  
Hush their voices echoing in the hollows  
of your mind;  
Lower them gently into the grave  
as lies of love.

Light's pain is not relieved  
through glasses smoked by would-be truth;  
Stare light in the face.  
It will never die,  
Never go away,  
But neither will it blind.

## Staining the Porch Rocker

---

I would have left it as it was.  
Pale, newly shaven.  
Nails poking their heads  
through the innocent pine.  
The sun would have bleached it  
to buckling, the rains  
softened it to destruction,  
a sweet rotting where ants  
and termites make their home.  
I have always been one  
to love a natural aging.

But you left too soon.  
And alone that night  
I found a dozen reasons.  
My hands were bare.  
The stain oily, thick.  
I stroked the arms, empty, curved.  
The hard back, the slats  
driven fast together.  
Even the spaces beneath,  
the spaces no one sees,  
I rubbed,  
my hands on the bare wood  
darkening.



## The Message

Did his face light up  
when you called my name  
and did he send any word?

Did he mention our hill?  
Though it's glazed with snow,  
he'll remember springtime,  
grasses greening, white orchards.

Tell him the willow  
by the pond is greening  
and the white swan  
is back with his mate.

Tell him the mare  
is still afoot  
and the soil needs turning.

The boy, should he ask  
is an inch taller.  
Should he hint of home,  
you'll know what to say—  
the boy misses him.

## Mimosa

When I was born, my father planted  
a mimosa sapling—to grow with me,  
for me to climb when I was ten.  
I climbed those limbs—was Tarzan, Jane,  
sometimes Boy—and where two branches bent,  
I hid a tin, a Prince Albert tobacco box.  
Inside, a ruby ring, the prize from Cracker Jacks,  
one bluejay feather, silver-tipped and thin,  
two glass marbles bright as suns,  
a yellow satin ribbon. I'd skin-the-cat,  
swing the low limb upside-down—my hair tumbling,  
sweeping the ground. Once I climbed so high,  
my father came all that way from his office—  
home, to bring me down.

Summer nights, when dishes rattled in the sink  
and windows lit, and planes and fireflies came  
to speckle skies—I'd sit on my favorite limb;  
pick soft pink puffs to buff my nose,  
to catch my hair, a crown.  
The whippoorwill might come to roost, to sing.  
I still climb high when I need someplace to go,  
still love things with wings—planes and birds,  
giant butterflies and gypsy moths and leaves that spin—  
and still have trouble sometimes, coming down.

## I Cry

I cry  
Because children die  
While I formulate a wage and salary program.  
In a far-off land  
Where only hunger holds their hand  
Children whimper while I write upon the sand.  
The snows are gentle in my night  
But cruel to the stretched-out fingers  
    of their fright.  
Off beyond the haze  
Above the tree-line of my gaze  
Children stop the search for love and die.  
Somewhere are leaves that hide the sun  
And rooted paths where children run  
And other men who cry,  
And do their work  
And wonder why.

## Unofficial Greeter

When winter came to town at 5:23 last Friday morning  
There wasn't any brass band at the courthouse, nor any mayor  
To give him the key to our city. There wasn't anyone but me  
To say a few frigid words to autumn when she bundled her rags  
On a stick, and, turning up her ragged collar, walked slowly  
Down the dirt road to Hand-out.

When winter rode up Littlejohn Street, at 5:23,  
His white stallion's mane was flecked with ice,  
And he routed autumn's pitiful redcoat rear-guard  
In the old field where the Opera House once stood.  
The fiery neighing of that heavy-footed stallion  
Sent tremors as acrobats to scale our walls,  
To twirl our steeples as if they were all misty tops.  
In the sky two white clouds were fat geese  
Running from the plucking wind, and every power line in town  
Was a 'cello bleating about hard times and falling weather.

Finally, the sun was a yellow-headed plowboy  
Whistling to his team and trying to get his plow-point  
Into the frozen rows of daybreak's newgrounds.  
I waved my hand in fulsome greeting, and then  
I told winter I'd hold his great silver stallion  
If he wanted to light and rest.  
Having settled another morning and changed another guard  
I excused myself and turned another Friday and a winter  
To anyone who aspired to be a legatee.

## Students

Faces like cupped palms.  
What would you hide, keep back?  
Every year thick as kudzu  
they crowd the classroom.  
The smallest sprout shows  
there is really no death.  
Blonde and brazen, who taught you  
the summer? Third row, second seat,  
somniaulant, don't sleep.  
I am the egotistical troll  
guarding your semester's castle.  
Before you I spangle my talents.  
For you my best sterling: fiery  
tongue. And in my pockets candy,  
stones: seven semi-precious  
vocabulary words.  
Seven gems I save for you.

## On a Dove's Wings

in the corridor We stood,  
my silver wings held your  
soft whiteness in a dove's  
kiss.

We perched on a park bench,  
picked Each other's hearts apart.  
and above the veranda-  
eclipsed Battery we flew  
together.

In the light of a parking lot,  
our wings touched, flirted,  
tangled among Themselves.

## The Lasting

The flowers, the wine, the common  
gifts of love do not linger  
like love itself they too  
soon find another  
cottage like the one we pass  
on the way to work  
with a garden that tends  
its own borders, grass  
that limits its height,  
and a life so easy it strains  
imagination. What lasts  
is less cozy, more pervasive;  
the sulfur air of a paper  
plant that gives a small town  
its only hope of growth,  
the river that each spring  
leaves its bed to visit  
the streets of the port,  
the long howl coming into the world  
to find its hound. The lasting  
knows no containment; abandon  
is its wild reward.

## A Plate of Bread

Once, swinging on the rocker-chair  
that faces woods behind our home,  
my daughter and I were still enough to see  
a chipmunk scabble down the woodpile,  
nose around, then skitter behind a log.  
That caused her to run inside,  
fetch a shallow dish and chunk of bread  
to feed what she'd seen. I explained  
that night was best for shy things,  
that a chipmunk won't return  
as our neighbor's dog would—  
best, then, to leave the bread behind  
at the edge of the woods, and hope.

Each day became a ritual  
close to the supper hour,  
when the long shadows of pines and maples  
stretched deep across our lawn,  
a ritual of tearing bread  
and placing the plate on a stone  
for an animal she'd never see again.  
This lasted fourteen days, long enough  
for her to be enchanted by  
her sandbox and swing again,  
long enough for its shadow  
to stretch across my thoughts.

Not for the impulse of giving food  
which, God knows, is common,  
nor for the delicate gesture  
involved in the breaking of bread,  
but for her joy in the simple act,  
for not having to *bæ* there  
watching while the gift's enjoyed—  
yes,  
for that, Christina, I am moved  
now and at the hour this is read.



## Second Child

Passion's first fruit  
complete and beautiful  
fills, outgrows the bowl  
becomes my day  
my star

But other nights  
refuse a void  
and stars take  
many forms.

Book XI of Light Food

Men are hunters and fishers, netters and trappers.  
And I have been Artemis, wild and virgin  
in the sacred places: turning intruders to deer.  
A new metamorphosis this time. I am a deer, too.

You feel the golden arrow in your hide, and are  
running, fleeing: anywhere, anywhere *else*; anywhere  
*safe*. It's too late for *safe*. And you know  
your arrow hit me. I am a dead deer, too.

Artemis

herself is wounded. That's the difference. The myth  
has a different ending this time,  
more like the Chinese poem about hunters  
invading a countryside, "seducing women"  
who are "nourishing spring lusts."

The loss

of privacy then must come. The *private* parts  
are full of longing to be changed. Artemis  
puts down her bow. Her arrows scatter. She  
is naked. Her drops of water change her own  
skin, too, to a deer's hide; her hair is light brown  
fur; her eyes gentle, pleading. She gives chase.  
The dogs are in another part of the forest.  
So are the deer the love god sacrificed. You touch  
my waist. It only takes one touch to start this  
fire that will tremble under our skins  
the rest of our lives.

Weep-Willow  
(For Lee)

At night she watched the road  
and sang. I'd sigh and settle on the floor  
beside her. One song led  
to one more song. Some unquiet grave.  
A bed of stone. The ship that spun round  
three times 'ere it sank,  
near ninety verses full of grief.  
She sang sad all night long

and smiled, as if she dared me  
shed a tear. Sweet Lizzie Creek swung low  
along the rocks, and dried beans rattled  
in the wind. Sometimes her black dog howled  
at fox or bear, but she'd not stop,  
no, not for God Himself, not even if he came  
astride a fine white horse and bore the Crown  
of Glory in his hands. The dark was all  
she had. And sometimes moonlight  
on the ceaseless water. "Fill my cup,"

she'd say, and sip May moonshine  
till her voice came back as strong as bullfrogs  
in the sally grass. You whippoorwills  
keep silent, and you lonesome owls go haunt  
another woman's darkest hours. Clear,

clear back I hear her singing me to sleep.  
"Come down," she trolls,  
"Come down among the willow  
shade and weep, you fair  
and tender ladies left to lie alone,  
the sheets so cold,  
the nights so long."

## Words

---

On secret winter days  
my heart anticipates your presence  
beyond cold window panes.  
Warm, glowing lamplight spills  
into the passing days of strangers.  
*I gather it,*  
*ripe as apples in the snow.*  
You wait for me—mere breath  
holds me in your eyes,  
drowning in your voice,  
close enough to touch.

Words,  
the only gifts we bring,  
fill my mind with  
sunshine, warming water.  
*Swans could swim in pools of dreams.*  
I bite my tongue, ward  
off love's faint confessions,  
resist the need to pour  
myself like oil upon your feet,  
sweet wine into your cup—  
a hand I cannot hold,  
it is not offered me.  
I memorize your face, your body,  
with my green, green eyes.

Storm Clouds

From her kitchen window,  
She watches storm clouds gather  
Like clusters of dark purple grapes.  
She remembers other storms  
When angry voices rolled like thunder  
And bitterness struck like bolts of lightning.  
She lets the dishwater from the sink.

## The Green Woman

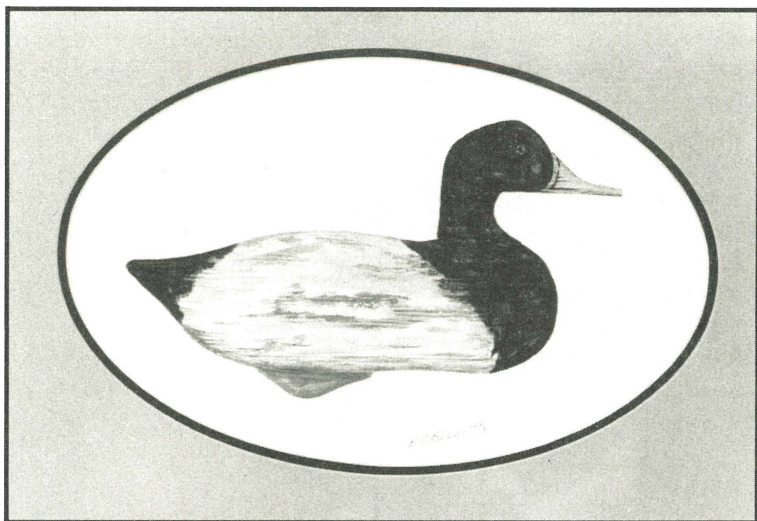
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She should have been serene,  
a woman in a pale green sheath,  
hair pulled back in a pretty  
wreath the color of alfalfa.

She should have bent over the humming  
flowerbeds at daybreak, thinned the wide-ranging  
iris, bruised in its slipper, pinched back  
the red impatiens at her borders, and generally  
tidied up. She should have turned away  
from the cawing blackbirds and any overly  
persistent light—turned toward him  
at the window: his lyric sight would be  
on her, and on the little girls in their  
buttercup leggings, their snug shoes  
yielding a little in the dew  
as they picked the blue Cupid's dart  
and put it in their baskets.

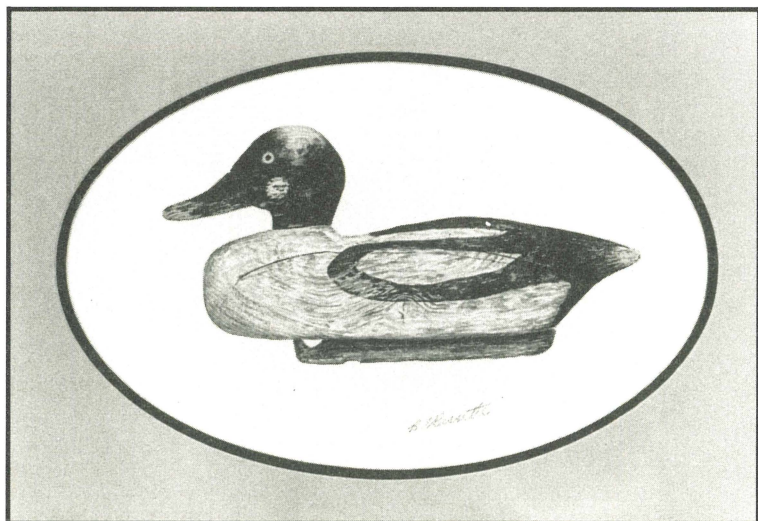
She shouldn't have been this  
white thing, worrying words  
like beads, hurrying night  
to night again, skipping  
all the beats. She never  
should have missed a  
note of the blissful  
parrot's song he hummed.

She should have been calm  
as kohlrabi, a woman less  
patient with unruly florid things,  
a woman in a pale green dress.



Duck Decoy

watercolor



Duck Decoy

watercolor

## What Dreams? for Bob

You have slept late. The coffee is ready, and I,  
for you. Walking gazelle soft, I bring two mugs  
to bedside. The mugs steam with smell that is  
known to meet us, when each is on the other's  
side of sleep.

I am caught in the hold of your sleep-drawn hands. Your  
fingers fold into loose fists, but slowly, the smallest  
fingers first then finger following finger til your thumbs  
deftly latch your new-sculpted grip.

The hands don't relax, but the muscles in your face  
slacken softly as white chocolate on a warm day.  
You could be holding diamonds, or the shorn locks  
of Sampson's hair or fine-formed grains of simple wheat.  
Whatever you hold, you have saved from falling.

If I ask you later what you dreamed,  
you will say only that you slept well,  
your voice falling soft like chips tossed  
quickly by a skilled whittler's hand,  
away from what takes shape  
by the knife and all that forms at  
the heart of wood.

I know you can't tell me, even if  
the dream has gone with waking or if the words  
can only fall, not hold. Awake, you've no patience  
with what you haven't claimed. Something in your grain  
names me close to you, but strange.



## Your Scarf

Worn near my cheek,  
The fragrance wraps me  
Against the chill of your absence.

The fabric, soft as cool fingers  
Lingering on wanting flesh,  
Soothes my restlessness.

The pattern crosses like our lives,  
It's frayed at the end,  
Like our love.

Empty coldness still penetrates  
The warmth.

Leni: Letter from Castle Berg

*"It is perfect here, Princess—everything is...even the housekeeper Leni, who purveys to all my needs and looks after me so quietly, silently, almost atmospherically, that I am able to treat her more as a pleasant climate than as a personification."*

—Rainer Maria Rilke to Marie Taxis from Schloss Berg am  
Irchel, Canton Zurich, Switzerland, 15 December 1920

The wind curves snow high on the pane;  
today the man from the village  
had to shovel a path to the door  
to deliver the milk and the mail.

Thank you, no, I have no need of a cat.  
The fire in the grate speaks to me day and night;  
the blizzard makes fine music, better than pianos;  
loaves rising in the rack require me constantly, like children.

He in the back room calls out  
(not to me, nor in complaint)—the walls echo  
his footsteps. How he contends with himself,  
like branches wrestling the gale.

Like a currier I comfort and groom, feeling precisely  
what to do. I serve his tea in silence,  
trailing the warmth of the hearth through draughty halls  
from the folds of my skirt.

He is a great man, they tell me, learned  
in letters and philosophy; strange I should find him  
much like me, long at the windows, thinking  
of wind, snow, fire, bread, tea.

## Years of Time

*"The word 'impossible' is found only in the dictionary of a fool."*

—Napoleon

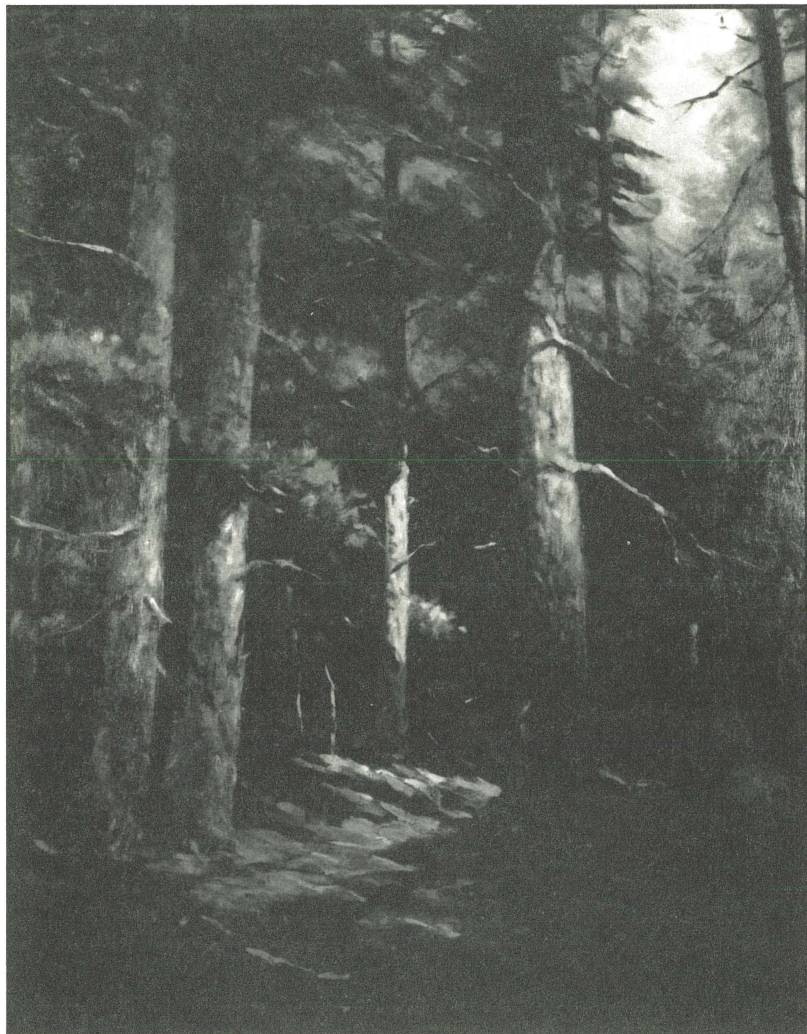
The years between us  
catch in my throat  
like a knot of grief that won't dissolve.  
They make me sick with envy,  
immoral with greed.  
They make me negotiate with dreams,  
bargain with gods you never heard of,  
strange beings that do deliver.

The years between us keep me  
awake at night counting them past.  
They make me empty with hope  
strung out like a dry skin.  
If you believe in time warp, witches, and spells,  
believe in this and don't sleep light.  
I would kill to move one of us closer together.

---

# —AND BEYOND

*Come, let us walk into April*



Virgin Pines

oil

Let Us Walk Into April

It was a pear tree in bloom  
That lit up your eyes.  
You came at blossom time—  
Dogwoods and lilacs,  
The camellia and azalea,  
And the glow of the redbud tree—  
Thousands of wildflowers run before your feet,  
And a faint green hovers in the woods.  
Here we are just before the coming of April,  
When the whole world is new  
And each day is a beginning,  
A time of sunlight and splendor—  
Come, let us walk into April.

Star With Sun  
(after T. Matsuyama)

Look at the sky.  
Everyone can see  
A pure white star  
After a long journey.

Autumn sky afternoon.  
Just myself  
Looking at  
The wideopen white star.

I lie down on the green  
Just in front of City Hall.  
I desire abundant space more than death.  
I seek grandeur of time more than love.

Graceful speech has been asking  
And I ask for graceful speech.  
My bashful dear, we are only a bashful One.  
Why are we shaking like this?

The Star of Abraham has been sent.  
The Star of Isaac will be sent.

Well I shall outrun the signal  
From the Boy to be a Father—  
Listening to it all the way.  
Keeping true all the way.

*(with Yozo Shibuya)*

## Passport

---

His Liberty Bell passport  
is an American elegance,  
inked and whorled, more beautiful  
than Jefferson and Lincoln,  
non-negotiable.

Janos locks his door now against Russians,  
safe and radared in Carolina swampland,  
a citizen of Whiteville, American taxpayer  
remembering Hungary,  
the passport smooth as a glove in his hand.  
He knows what it means  
to wake up and speak English.

So, Janos has a claim on bitterness.  
Beyond his door, the warm Waccamaw  
rolls to shore, and his smooth daughter tans.  
She welcomes the air she's hung  
with names, American, Hungarian:  
she's home among the enemy.

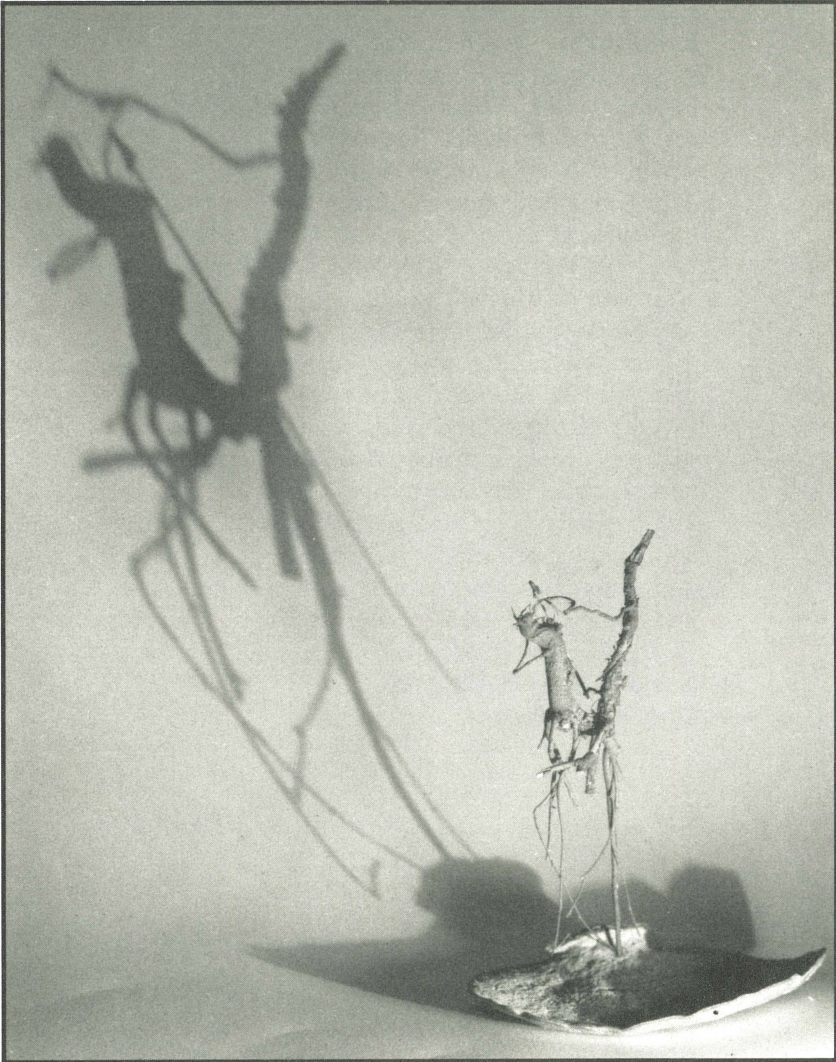


## Light Beyond Thought

I wonder what summer I remember? I  
Sit in shadow, where a dust of pollen  
On waterfloor moves with the broom of wind.  
And gnats gyrate, lighter than dust,  
Fluff on the wrist of the river,  
Jumping to its pulse. Spider webs float,  
Dragonflies chase each other, and the sycamore  
Leaning over from the opposite shore,  
Its trunk in splotches like quarters,  
Like camouflage, is almost silver. Its  
Roots exposed by erosion flow  
And mold like concrete, a scaffolding  
Intricate as water in limestone—  
Like the roots of memory. Mountain  
Laurel blazes in flower. Green seems  
To create its own meaning. This long  
Day's sun, still high, seems frozen.  
Glistens too richly to question.

Mahalia Jackson Gets Ready to Go on Stage

I got a song,  
Lord,  
I got a song to sing,  
to belt to the blue horizon,  
to peel the edge off the clouds,  
to strike like a slice of lightning, Lord, up there,  
my song to drum like thunder,  
waking the whole world from slumber,  
calling all folk to quiver, Lord,  
to quake, to shiver  
with fear, with rage, with love, Lord,  
with love that lights the sky  
and blazes blue in my veins  
and curves like the rim of rainbow  
and trembles like winds of October  
in trees of copper and gold, oh, Lord,  
that song going to make all the folks start clapping,  
and stomping their happy feet,  
and snapping their long strong fingers,  
and jumping as straight as arrows,  
and singing their hallelujahs,  
and staring with great wide eyes, Lord,  
gazing in most amazement  
at me in my red silk glory,  
Lord, Lord, at me.



Don Quixote

two roots, a pine needle  
and a bracket fungus

Shadows that Steep in Dreams of the New Ground

Dream, dream to sleep.  
Rock infant softness to our shoulder.  
Dream not only of the land we give you,  
but of the mountains' blue trill toward worlds.  
Dream not only of the river's bordering lace,  
but of the gold glint of trout easing a sheer of sun.  
Dream not only of the boulder's wrinkled prune shape,  
but of its cave's delicate moan of cool air.  
Dream not only of the wood's shadows folding light,  
but of the walnut's deepest fingernail-press of bark.  
Dream not only of the field's claim to smooth green,  
but of the wild carrot giving itself to goldenrod and infinite running.  
Dream not only of the primitive road's melancholy color,  
but of where wild turkey and deer prints mold to fit future walks.  
Dream not only of the stream tingling down the slope vertebrae,  
but of its bright stone collection and slippery pungence.  
Dream not only of the wind thumbing a ball across the yard,  
but of branches quietly weighed with the feather sleep of wind.  
Dream, dream not only of the distant tree line's serration,  
but of eye level pins marching upon the mound of a pin cushion.  
Dream, dream, dream not only of the open pond of sky,  
but of the clouds signing an interpretation of what the earth smokes.  
Dream not only of the land we give you,  
the jumbled code of landscape,  
but somewhere tagged to your dreams,  
allow the essence of what we cannot convey in a poemtime,  
the dream of the land we give you.

## The Watchman

Tonight the Mirror opens up to see  
The watchman keeping vigil on the roof  
Of the ruining house. The whole long year  
He has lain houndlike on his belly  
Awaiting the semaphore  
Blaze, his hands clenched on the eave, awaiting proof  
Of a victory that shall pull down  
A proud and bitter family, in rain  
Or cold starshine stretched out aloof  
To all discomfort, searching the world-rim for a sign.

A thirst is in him for the triumph of his king.  
A thirst is in his tribe to know  
They shall not heir disgrace  
To their children's children, they shall not bow  
Their heads before a barbarous race  
Who worship alien gods. Though the prophets sing  
A harder tragedy to follow  
If they win the war, let it still be so.

He is half-crazed with longing. The mountain peak  
He stares toward in the reverberant night  
Appears and disappears, dark on dark;  
Advances upon him, then takes flight  
Into the downward-twisting bleak  
Futureless whirlpool of aching eyesight.  
The stars flitter aimlessly above his head  
Like an irritated squad of flies over the dead.

Suppose the message come, the fire leaps red  
In the far blackness. Can he still recognize  
The signal? So many hours,  
So many nights of blankly turning skies  
Have darkened his capacities  
To understand. The arrow showers  
Of meteors no longer startle; he no longer numbers  
The falling stars.  
The Great Bear lumbers  
Over his soul, leaving a shadow like an ebony bruise.

And then  
the bruise becomes a pit  
That walls him in  
So he cannot see out.

Outdoors is Closed  
(Lyrics for an original song)

The power plant opened ten years ago,  
then closed down nine years ago,  
then opened back up eight years ago.  
Now everything's all right.  
We got plenty of heat and light.

But outdoors is closed.  
It's all shut down.  
You can't go outside, and walk on the ground.  
You've got to stay indoors,  
watch the box and meditate.  
'Cause if you go outside—you might radiate.  
Outdoors is closed; everything's all right;  
no more street fights.

I never understood the pandemonium—  
it just rained a little plutonium,  
dropped iodine on my grapevine;  
so now I stock freezer food, Puss and Boots for the cat,  
stay inside and get fat.

'Cause outdoors is closed.  
It's all shut down.  
You can't go outside, and walk on the ground.  
You've got to stay indoors,  
watch the box and meditate.  
'Cause if you go outside—you might radiate.  
Outdoors is closed; everything's all right;  
no more street fights.

Well it ain't so bad with the trees all gone,  
little brown flowers, little brown lawn.  
The birds don't sing, but the power lines hum.  
It's nice near the plant.  
Near the plant's where I'm from.  
It's quiet near the plant.  
Near the plant's where I'm from.

## My Father's Curse

---

My father strode in anvil boots  
Across the fields he cursed;  
His iron fingers bruised the shoots  
Of green; he stabbed the earth.

My father cursed both sun and rain;  
His sweep cut corn and weed,  
And where his fiery plow had lain  
The ruined earth would bleed.

Yet though he raged in bitter brew  
Thick oaths that belled his throat,  
God rammed His springing juices through  
And fleshed Himself in fruit.



## **Eyeblink**

When I stand, when I  
look over the privacy fence,  
there is no shadow,  
only steady sunlight  
bouncing off butterfly wings  
and apple tree foliage.

In an eyeblink I can  
change my focus,  
see sun's ray  
or shadow.

Autumn Catalogue

---

Bravely  
as the light flies  
I tell you how my heart breaks  
for one red maple  
on a hill in South Carolina  
and for a redtail hawk,  
how autumn tramped that country  
in dirt feet keening  
like an old song. I reason

that things are most themselves  
in autumn when at four o'clock  
the sun from high cirrus cuts  
tall poplars.  
Their yellow hands holding the blades  
they abide the time  
over farms  
and country roads. My hand

translucent as I  
write by this window  
proclaims its architectonic;  
tendons slide along the knuckles  
gently lift the net of veins  
where the life goes home, and I recall  
how soft your eyes are sometimes. If

my character likewise  
should be exposed,  
it would be found a somewhat overbloomed  
perpetual. But if found at best  
I think I could hollow out my bones,  
wait with the redtail hawk  
in a known spiral upwards, all  
utterance suspended. Glaciers snap.

Quite suddenly  
my hair is white—a hawk cries  
westward.



Iris

pen/ink and watercolor

## Acknowledgement

---

Pink iris opened in the night,  
it glistens now from last night's rain.  
I search to glimpse its inwardness,  
and see enfleshed the involuted  
pink of pearl pour from the aureole  
and show the traced magenta veins.  
The carmine feathered triuned wings  
emote, evolve from center out  
in rapsody of glory-frills.

I close my eyes and there it is  
transcribed inside on softest black.  
No wordsmith penned tributes of worth  
to this pink sculpted thing so near  
to liquid air,  
perhaps an angel's thought flown down  
from bower of bliss and stilled a day  
by special dispensation.  
No matter that it fades tonight.

At close of day I still am mute  
and so I turn toward west and see  
the whole acknowledgement expressed  
as entire heaven fires reflect  
pure pearl pink with crimson triuned  
featured clouds, magenta traced and  
centered by the red, red sun;  
the iris now is magnified  
and magnified.

Less is More  
(Triptych)

I.

Far left  
in a dusty corner of the Florence Cathedral,  
I sit. About me pray God's sheep:  
the faithful, the devout: men's heads bowed, sides  
of their faces erased by setting sun; women's heads,  
mantilla-veiled, their cheeks and brows spidered  
by webbing lace. Trying to solve the mystery  
I stare up at Michelangelo's *Unfinished Pieta* (Jesus,  
His Mary Mother, the Magdalene, Joseph of Arimathea), and  
wonder why the stone is undone.

II.

In my dream that night  
like the suction fish stuck to a manta ray, I lie  
on my stomach, hitching a ride on the back of a flatbed  
truck. Over, over, on this driverless carrier, this bullet  
train, four tires beat monotonous thump: Rolling over, I  
discover six silent lambs (shorn of snouts, mouths, tongues,  
their faces end in mailbox slots), looking down on me.  
Undone with their odd anatomy, I know, unlike my newborn-son  
(he grew the missing flesh between his forefinger and thumb  
in days) these lambs won't change.

III.

Next day in the old hills of Fiesole,  
I come upon sheep grazing; the nursery rhyme kind, they  
baa-baa on grass. ...And, and then, I make the leap:  
the sweet unfinished dreamflock and the Holy marble pleased  
me more because their faces begged:  
*Complete me, not with your eyes but with your mind,  
the way the blind see.*

To the Mistress

To the mistress I never had,  
I miss you.  
Slinky red or vibrant green  
might have flowed from your hips  
as they flow from an apple when it's  
picked fresh and washed in spring water.  
Oh, the crispness of it,  
sweet and bitter all at once  
like your kisses  
(though i never tasted)  
I miss them.  
Mistress, I miss you  
the way I miss an old dog,  
long gone from age or automobile—  
a friend that curled up, licked my hand,  
brought comfort. Comfort.  
Demanded nothing, save a little food  
and like friendship in return.  
Mistress I never had,  
Where were you?

Tape Wrap  
(For James R. VanLaan)

Several volumes might oughta do it the job  
"But," you'd laugh with me, "Who the hell'd read 'em?"

To capture verbally a friendship or rarity  
The very rarity itself of friendship in a small space  
Cannot be done—or  
(And here we laugh again) done *well*.

So. In traditional fashion, I refuse to mention the gifts the lifts  
The jokes the quests together among musty stacks of books  
And stacks likewise of sometimes musty friends too. I won't mention  
The in(famous) convertible-top replacement or the  
Spontaneous "Que Pasa?" that broke up our girls. Or the  
Flavors of beers bought the old wood hauled the insulation inhaled  
The other crazies the loving of my daughter Yes the other crazies.

Or your Whitmanian wipes of my fevered fright at Wake in the nights.  
("Which I do not forget.")

Let me, rather, old Meerschaum Man remarkable, share perception  
With you of one act just an-image-really which is  
So by damn symbolic it sounds made up but is not  
Was not. It was:

That Dutch determination had you scrounged on the floor in a corner  
crowded  
Of your shamle-staggered paint-smelling office Your business calling  
Need of other attentions. Redecoration plans Big things to  
Get done all around us.

Yet you hunkered there with my silly headphones faulty  
A puzzle a challenge and we  
Worked together together together on it  
That problem of capricious breakdown way into your night.

Still the coupling refused to work.  
The sound was a shattered sweetness    distorted.

Both offended    we wanted the music to come through    by God.

And then    as one    we simplified    snipped the middle coupling out  
Like an appendix    like a cancer. Then you sutured, you soldered  
Spliced and taped.    Tested.    We  
    Grinned at each other over our “Voilas” amid some sweet somewhere  
    Violas.

Today, Bless You, I heard Ralph Vaughan Williams’ Fifth with tears.  
His world of tone and texture between my ears because first you lent  
Me the record    But mostly because you would not stop ‘til you  
Had repaired my twisted line    to Beauty

Thanks is not enough. But it’ll have to stand for *this* connection.



Night Anthem in West Negril  
(for Derek Walcott)

Who is the cricket's kin? Who can live  
at his pitch, more vivid than fever, fast  
as the green vervain draining hibiscus?  
The cicada endures such joy, sings, gives

his shrill evidence. Significant, intense,  
he spends his hour in the eucalypt, while  
hawk moths hover after the moon, the wily  
grassquits skitter amid fireflies, their flints

impotent to hurry dawn. So cicadas chirr  
like stars tightening; cricket-pitch, though  
the crickets no longer saw their caskets,

and cicadas no longer inhabit theirs.  
Philosophers sleep through summer solstice  
and miss the meaning, an island's show  
of suicide. Ripe mangoes fall and ginger

ripens. To what end all this? Remember  
your fury when, young, you stood on a cliff  
and wished to be sheer song, thinking, "If...."

## Cloud Passage

Cumulus clouds  
dominate the sky  
like marble monuments  
inscribed with fading runes.  
We lie upon the earth  
and gaze at unknown symbols.

I once knew a man  
who photographed only clouds.  
Covering box and head  
with black cloth  
he pointed an intrusive eye toward heaven  
and stopped both wind and cloud  
to read the sacred text.

I never saw his photographs.  
He died before I knew  
the permanence of clouds.

## The Prey

She came sounding a nightingale's wail  
A crowline out of West Virginia,  
Her beady-eyed flock of seven to rest sunnyside  
A Chatham County sedge hill,  
The oldest, thirteen, let go campus dreams  
Endured himself to farm country, farm folk.  
Muscles surging felled trees, axed wood  
Hay bales from hot fields.  
He horse-talked to thoroughbreds, artistic hands  
Patted mares, slabbed his family a cabin  
Trapped game to keep them fed.  
Red Man bulging his jeans, juicing his grin.

Out of the coal mine, running a downhill chase,  
"The old man's a drunk," the neighbors said,  
The abandoned miner tracked down his prey—  
Open season. His double-barrel blast through  
Her bolted door scattered bodies like a covey.  
Lawmen downed the wiry hunter.  
Neighbors buried the thirteen year old.  
"Put him away nice."  
Now winter winds whistle the rocks  
Smoke curls the boy-laid chimney  
And summer breezes echo whippoorwills  
Up and down these Deep River hills.

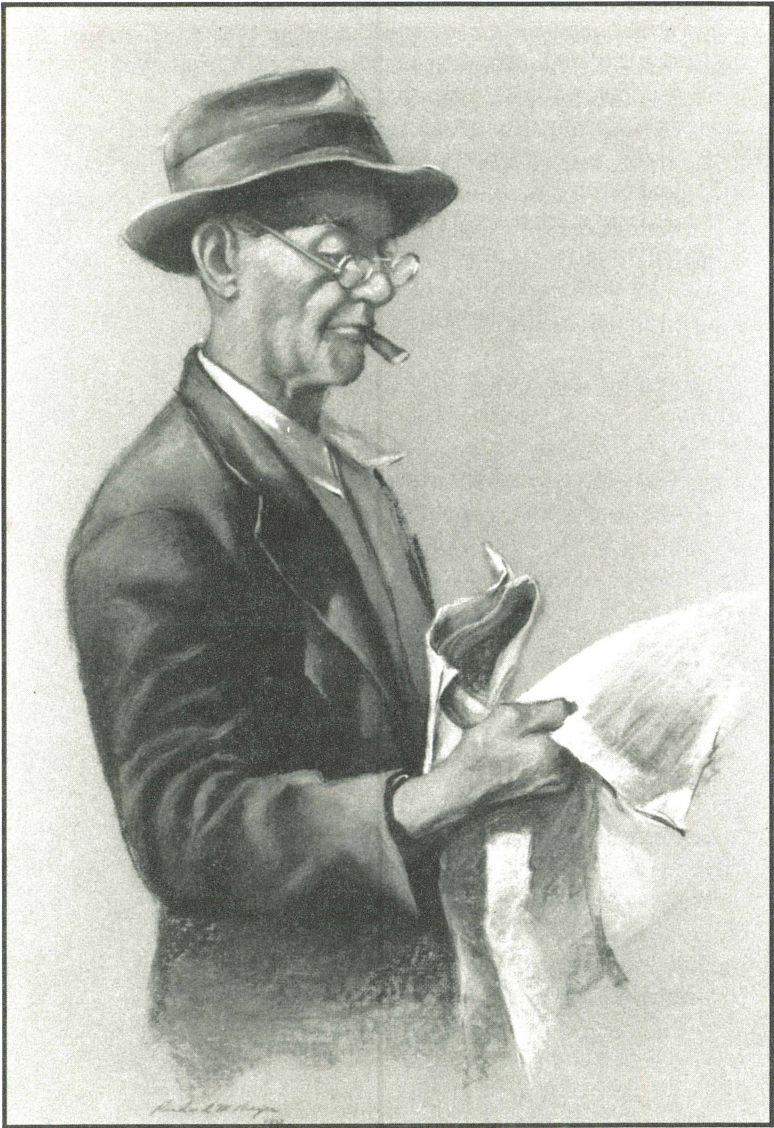
## All I Know About Berries

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Walking by half-tamed woods, where I'd been a hundred,  
a thousand times, I saw a sassafras tree,  
a tall one, and hanging over it, a taller  
wild cherry. How long since I'd seen wild cherries?  
I'd forgotten the taste; the little clusters  
were low enough to reach and ripe enough  
to try: that unmistakable tang.  
Birds get drunk on the berries. Maybe I  
got drunk too and didn't even know it.  
I learned what to eat and what not to eat  
so early I've forgotten how.  
I ate mulberries until I was dyed purple.

"Thimbleberries," the woman beside me  
at the county market said  
in a foreign accent. I wanted to ask her,  
what is a thimbleberry, and where are you from?  
Instead I looked it up in the dictionary:  
raspberries. They grow wild too, in the mountains.  
The leather woman who runs the roadside stand  
where we stop for the special grapes knew what we wanted.  
"They have a kind of a whang to them," she said.  
But we were too early, or late, I forget which.  
I think the grapes are wild ones, muscadines,  
or maybe just gone wild, off on their own.

Blackberries are our berries. They're everywhere.  
June bugs will fight you for them.  
Picking blackberries, watch out  
for bears in the West, in the East,  
chiggers, which are more insidious  
though not fatal. How long since I've seen  
persimmons ripening toward a fall frost?



Character Study

pastel

## Sitting Out a War Once-Removed

It stormed a lot that summer—  
brute cloudbursts, pane-rattling thunder.  
Open the front door and a bolt might rip  
the length of a hall.

It was days of card games and let's pretend,  
a battery of rain at the window.

The weeks racked up a list of disasters:  
strikes on the golf course,  
drownings by undertow.

A man on our block took to his boat  
and never returned,  
but the war took most,  
bit by bit someone,  
no one, we knew,  
the way ants peel away from remains,  
hauling off piecemeal  
legs, thorax, wings.

We were left wings, oak leaves, stars,  
and a box of photos—a gallery  
of uniformed figures in knocked out places  
we could only conjure from books.

Villagers, flowers, ruddy cheeks—  
what did we know?

Caught in the steady drizzle of our lives,  
we hardly looked up from the game  
of high-card-take-all.

## The Other Side

Five years old again, lost in darkness,  
Parents and brothers call  
From the other side of the stream,

*Richard, Richard!* He tries to reach  
Them. Hands lunge in the dark.  
Each one says, *Take me.*  
*I'll pull you across.*

Just as he touches his father's fingers  
He is sucked back into a hole  
And falls down, down, down, down.

His seventy-five-year-old emaciated body  
Stretches out—a long white ribbon  
Under the sheet.

Faces hover. *I thought he was gone.*  
*His heart did stop.*

A prisoner in this clean, well-lit hell  
Constantly attacked by white-clad  
Grim-faced devils with needles, pills,  
Tubes, enemas, robbing him of dignity,

They don't understand  
When he talks to people  
On the walls and ceiling,

Refuses food and pills, has accidents  
And mostly longs  
For the other side.

Salieri's Sonnet

Salieri breeds his own cross and crown and composes  
in the language of rats in a choir under his earthly  
empty seat. Each morning he pleads and prays and weeps  
in a human voice unable to accompany thunder, volcanic  
wind, heed noise. Salieri breeds his own cross and crown.  
Amadeus is born from the pale snake and wicked pig  
and he turns to the open window backstage to watch the snow rise  
between the fence rail and black hooves. The muse begins  
and we call it human as it sleeps and we call it human  
as it wakes. Salieri breeds his own cross and crown.  
Amadeus hears the singing of the earth men and their ruby dolls.



In the Old Camden Market on Main Street  
(For Starkey)

There we were in the supermarket of books;  
Friends of the Library had stocked  
magazines where mushrooms had been,  
science fiction between spinach  
and bibb lettuce. Ghosts of artichokes  
stood on their heads over the gourmet  
reading lists. There was fiction  
in the meat case. Nabakov with lamb  
and veal, Hemingway beside haddock,  
Fitzgerald with flounder  
and in the wine,  
Gertrude Stein. While Alice B.  
toiled among the tortes, bread and apple  
pies. Where beans had been;  
fresh, baked, dried, canned, assorted,  
sat National Geographics jungle deep,  
waist high. Wildlife swung  
on the produce carousel. Paperbacks  
filled potato bins. Whodunits did away  
with the celery slot. Broccoli and carrots  
caught mayhem and murder. In the Laundry,  
Travel and Leisure took the aisle.  
Cleaning products had Country Life  
and frozen foods, how-to-do-its.

Oh Friends, Friends, we wheeled out  
shopping bags from Save Rite, Fast Way,  
Horn of Plenty. Never have we been  
so filled and deliciously fed.

## The Fence

Having sneaked our first cigarettes—  
menthol filter-tipped Kools we puffed  
like pros beneath a broken moon—  
Danny and I found ourselves astride a picket fence  
just one block from our empty beds  
when a bony blue tick named Duke barked.  
He was answered by a sooner in the next county  
who awakened a bitch up on Goldsborough Street, etc.,  
until the night was a chorus of mongrels gospeling.  
Doors and windows jammed open,  
lights flooded the darkness, and we sat  
trembling astride that fence  
not knowing which way to fall.

I tumbled to one side, Danny to the other,  
and we lay still as dead men  
while flashlights ogled the damp grass,  
danced among the limbs of cedars, clattered along  
the picket fence just inches above our faces  
buried in the fetid glistening of spring onions.  
We did not draw breath  
until one by one the lights had died,  
and the barking trailed into echo.

Later we bragged,  
slapped backs and laughed  
as we told friends of our escape,  
how we'd outwitted man and beast  
by just keeping our cool and knowing  
that eventually it would all go away,  
that no one would remember  
those doors thrown open into darkness  
or the children we once had been.

## Endangered Specimen

That snake you spared last fall is back.  
"Look," you said, spying the hatchling,  
"a baby copperhead." With a nudge  
from the toe of your boot, it was gone.  
Half grown, it watches me from the woodpile  
head raised above its bright mosaic coils.

As I walk the path in sandals,  
rainwashed roots twist from the ground  
and stop me cold, till wood is wood  
and I can breathe again. You,  
my naturalist son, would smile  
at my layman's fantasy.

Yesterday I found snagged on a cedar branch  
a loop of tissue skin that bore its print.  
How many ghostly membranes will have peeled  
from its cool elliptical eyes before  
it is thick as the handle of the ax  
I keep at the back door?

When January is Cold

In this ice-edged hour, this January of hogkillings,  
I see the whipped creak of trace-chains  
slipping under wrinkled snouts, pigs'  
lashes like drawn shade-tassels hanging from closed lids,  
know the running blood, the trembling  
jar of heads and ears on sleds muledrawn to the barrel  
sliced in two bubbling with scalding water  
triple rainbows in the sun—  
I believe in the first  
dying, feel the goneness, the sacrifices  
piling up in the fire growing around the lightwood  
knots under the vat, the ice melting in dribs down  
hanging trees,  
the washed-in-and-out of things in a January  
coming onto an old gallows tree when hogs are shot,  
cleaned and carved and salted in a box or hung up to the ceiling  
in smokehouses on nails and wires to cure,  
tongues dripping.

Verse Letter

Chuck Sullivan, strong Gaelic sea-surge name,  
And you, strong Gaelic sailor-son of God,  
Friend of the saints you most resemble: Peter,  
Teresa, Saint Don Bosco. Francis? Well,  
Perhaps not Francis, Chuck. But wait a while.

Are you aware, Chuck, how you fan the flame  
Flickering in your fellow poets' hearts,  
How your Samantha, Sean believe the gospel  
"According to Chuck" reborn in your soul's cell,  
You Irishman with that amazing smile?

What if you enter heaven deaf, lame,  
Eyeless? Let "Revelation" trace the arc:  
Leaping and shouting, you—*numero uno*—  
Will lead us like Hart's wildly ringing bell,  
You Israelite in whom there is no guile.

What do your gifts mean, Sullivan? What blame  
Must you endure should you deny the power  
Of drawing pilgrims to the running waters  
Where they can drink their peace, learn the godspell,  
Doomed without you to deserts mile on mile?

They mean, when the road forks you take the same  
Sharp-stoned cross-ending turn your Brother took  
When many walked with him no longer. Jesus  
Needs you to sing his truth, to laugh his will,  
To weep his tears, to play his knight in style.

Keep the Faith, catechist Chuck Sullivan;  
Pay the high price of love, embrace your night,  
Alone yet not alone, not one but two.  
Sullivan, Christ will tell you what to do,  
Simply, each morning, like the morning light.

## High Noon at the Matinee

If you ask me, I'm a feminist.  
Why then, again

thirty years later with  
children in my lap and  
Tex Ritter modulating my heartbeat  
do I sit through "High Noon"  
like a parched twelve-year-old  
lapping Gary Cooper's eyes  
like Texas deep-well water?

When Grace Kelly pleads,  
"Why must you go back to town  
and face Frank Miller's gang?"  
my stoic Cooper straight-lips it,  
"If you don't know, I can't explain it"—

the very thing  
you don't say to a feminist—  
and I just love it and think how perfect.

I've self-injected Steinem and Jong  
Friedan and Beauvoir. Still no immunity  
against a-man's-gotta-do  
what-a-man's-gotta-do

and when Cooper drills Miller,  
me and the kids whoop like Comanches  
and he could track Hadleyville dust  
through my bedroom anytime.

Am I still stuck  
in the Great Dismal Swamp  
of the '50's

or is it that lady Grace,  
the Coop's Quaker bride, finally  
backshoots the bad guy?

## Harbor

The night my grandfather died,  
I smoked my first cigarette  
squatting on hay  
musty as a root cellar.  
Outside, hogs  
panted in their pens,  
and far off the moonlight  
glistened on miles of old fence.

That night at the hospital,  
his oxygen tent  
billowed like a sail,  
hoses mooring him to his bed.  
I waited, listening  
to the plastic bellows  
and counted, remembering  
his breath rising like smoke,  
cold over the corn stalks.

## Sacred Shadows

---

She should have breathed.

She should have lifted up the corners  
of yellowed, crocheted lace  
and dusted more than dust away.  
She should have let the sunlight in  
instead of drawing heavy drapes....

But Grandma was sacred  
and what she did was, too.  
Even her gory rites of purification  
became stakes of true religion...  
to bless Grandma's wrongs  
she twisted all she knew of right,  
askew.

Just one piercing shaft of sunlight  
and Grandma's image  
would have turned to clay  
and Aunt could have walked away....

She could have breathed.



## October Shadows

Your granddad built highways.  
The last time I called  
your mom had died.

One night your uncle drove me  
in his jeep, headlights searching  
the fields for deer.

You and I agreed my calling  
would stop. I don't remember  
your daughter's name.

O.R. Mask

Whistling,  
bursting through the swinging door,  
surgeon's cap cocked over his left eye,  
his tunic blood-spattered green,  
he swaggers from the O.R.

"How did it go?" I ask.

He grins.

"Seven hours on the table,  
and the old crock died.  
But what the hell...  
'Can't win 'em all."

I stiffen, wheel away. Escape.

But I have left my specimens behind.  
I hesitate...turn back...  
then crack the door.

And there...alone,  
his forehead jammed against the tile,  
he beats and beats a fist  
against the wall.

Passiflora  
(To Paul)

You walk on shorebird legs  
    fingering shells in moist sand  
You examine each hammock plant  
    root, stem, leaf, flower  
    and know its whole name  
You count petals  
    dissect anther and pistil  
    brush pollen grains here to there  
You play violin pacing the length of the house  
    late at night  
    play psaltery and mandolin like a medieval minstrel  
Alone, wanting to be alone with your  
    passions

But what of this unnamed friend?  
Just a friend, you say  
You help her with her children now and then  
Three of them  
    two blond, blue-eyed girls near adolescence  
    and the baby  
        fragile, thin  
        with dark eyes and tracing fingers  
Did your friend offer one passion in hope of sharing  
    all the others?  
She must not know  
    you keep the curtains drawn  
    and wash your windows  
    at night

Cameron '85

---

When the Mexicans work here  
they leave old shoes in the yard  
and on the table out front  
hot peppers, red and green,  
like a hundred fingers.

## The Drums Come

The drums come  
on leaden feet  
the horns are windy toes  
violins flow under agile fingers

That music is childhood's world—  
a house of tangled sticks  
mental after-burn

The strains dredge up from memory  
the injustice of one spring day  
a friend conceived a prank for us  
then became the accuser  
her scheming  
robbed that neighbor's pansy bed  
not my small fingers

But the lashes you laid  
on my innocent flesh  
couldn't comprehend  
the word:  
"Hypocrite"

## Claiming the Body

*Corpus delicti*, my  
student pointed out,  
differs only a hair  
from *corpus dilecti*,  
the beloved's body  
from the corpse.

Do not wait for the coroner's call.  
Do not rely on dental records  
or what the subject wore when last seen.  
Even the mole under the left breast  
(nursing one infinitesimal and silken hair)  
is inconclusive. The braided scars  
at calf and chest where surgeons ripped  
a vein to splice into the plugged heart  
are undistinguished. We are all  
imperfect. We all have gone  
under the knife. How shall you know  
your true love from another, after  
the death squads come?

Anticipate.

Remark what qualities no undertaker  
(even in the Regime's employ) can sham:  
the staunch tongue that speaks love  
clearer than words. The tenor cry  
that breaks the throat to resonate  
in the great fleshed skull. The eyes,  
how blue they glare out of their wrinkled den.  
How from under the thick cuticle  
unmanicured, rises the moon.  
Do not wait. Rely on nothing.  
Claim the body now.



## Poets

**Betty Adcock** is Kenan Writer-in-Residence at Meredith College in Raleigh. She has published *Walking Out*, and *Nettles*, which won the Roanoke-Chowan Award. Recent work appears in *Georgia Review*, *Kenyon Review*, and *Southern Review*.

**Andrew J. Angyal** is an Associate Professor of English at Elon College.

**James Applewhite** was born in Stantonsburg, NC and attended Duke University where he now teaches. His *Ode to the Chinaberry Tree and Other Poems* won the 1986 Roanoke-Chowan Award. *River Writing*, *An Eno Journal* will be published in 1987.

**Calvin Atwood**, author of *A Squadron of Roses* lives in Atlanta with his wife, Carol Ann. He served twice as president of the North Carolina Poetry Society and is currently president-elect of the Georgia State Poetry Society.

**Margaret Boothe Baddour** has poems published in many magazines and anthologies, most recently *Stone Country* and *Blue Pitcher*. She is Vice President of NC Writer's Network; Editor of NC Women's Expressions Series, St. Andrews Press.

**Wilma Loeschon Barefoot** lives in the country with husband M.B. Barefoot. Family, church, and community activities engage all of her days at this time. Reading, cooking and gardening are her hobbies.

**Katherine Russell Barnes** is a wife, mother, grandmother, and nurse. She has a continuing love/hate affair with words. Her poems have been published in *Crucible*, *Pembroke Magazine*, and *Dragonfly*.

**Ronald H. Bayes** of St. Andrews College has lived in Japan on several occasions, and read at the first Japan-International Poetry Festival in 1987.

**Mae Woods Bell** is the author of *WRYmes* (St. Andrews College Press), and is an award-winning columnist, humorist and book critic. She was president of NC Writers' Conference; she also conducts a community college writers' workshop.

**Kate Blackburn** writes poetry, fiction, and drama and teaches journalism. Her work has appeared in Canada, England, Scotland, and here in the States. "I am a grandmother, a traveler, and an optimist, roughly in that order."

**Will Blythe** grew up in Chapel Hill. He has published fiction and reviews, and works now for *Esquire*.

**James Boyd** wrote short stories, poems, and novels including *Old Pine and Other Stories*, published posthumously in 1952, and his famous novels: *Drums*, *Marching On*, *Long Hunt*, *Roll River*, and *Bitter Creek*. He died in 1944.

**Sally Buckner** of Raleigh teaches at Peace College and co-directs the Capital Area Writing Project. Publications include articles, plays, stories, poems in many periodicals, and a poetry collection, *Strawberry Harvest*.

**Kathryn Stripling Byer** lives in Cullowhee with her husband and daughter. Her first book, *The Girl in the Midst of the Harvest* was published last year in the AWP Award Series. Her second book *Wild Wood Flower* is forthcoming.

**Mary Belle Campbell**, creative writing instructor, Sandhills Community College uses



Jung's "active imagination" and dream recall to stimulate greater awareness of one's storehouse of creative images. She has a book and two manuscripts.

**Joel Chace** currently teaches English at Mercersburg Academy in southern Pennsylvania. He has published poems in various magazines and journals. His first book, *The Harp Beyond the Wall*, was published in 1984 by Northwoods Press.

**Fred Chappell** teaches at the University of North Carolina at Greensboro. *The Fred Chappell Reader* appeared in 1987 from St. Martin's Press.

**Shirley Graves Cochrane** has published *Burnside*, and *Family and Other Strangers*. Her poetry and fiction have appeared in *The International Poetry Review*, *Belles Letters*, and *Mississippi Review*. She lives in Washington, D.C.

**Claire Cooperstein** of Chapel Hill has had poems published in *The Lyricist*, *Cairn*, *Rhino*, and as prize winners in *Crucible* and *Amelia Magazine*. Her work has appeared frequently in the NC Poetry Society's *Award Winning Poems*.

**Helen M. Copeland**, a "lay naturalist," has published four children's books, and short stories in numerous magazines. She has recently completed an adult novel. Her collection of poems will be published by St. Andrews Press.

**Emily Sargent Councilman** is a Past-Chairman of the Poetry Council of North Carolina, currently a member of the Poetry Society of America, the NC Writers' Conference, Poetry Society of NC, and consultant for the Burlington Writers Club.

**Betty Miller Daly** received many awards and prizes for her poetry and short stories. She published *As A Woman Thinketh*, and *Sandscript*. She served as president of the NC Poetry Society. In 1982 she died at the age of 56.

**Barbara Rosson Davis** is one of the founders of *Poetry Center Southeast* at Guilford College. She has poems in several publications including *International Poetry Review*, and *Carolina Quarterly*.

**Irene Dayton** is author of: *In Oxbow of Time's River*, *Seven Times The Wind*, *The Panther's Eye*, and *The Sixth Sense Quivers*. She has published in literary journals in the US, Europe, and Japan, and is working on her second novel.

**Ann Deagon**, writer in residence at Guilford College and Director of Poetry Center SE, works in both poetry and fiction. Her last novel was *The Diver's Tomb*; and *The Polo Poems* is forthcoming from the University of Nebraska-Omaha 1988.

**Gloria Delamar** is the author of scholarly reference books (*Curiosities of Mother Goose*; *Round Re-Soundings*; *Children's Rhymes and Rhythms*), features, op-eds, and poetry. She teaches writing and creativity techniques.

**William Delamar** is a hospital administrator who writes poetry, and has written and/or edited technical articles and manuals. He is currently working on a mainstream novel.

**Rebecca McClanahan Devet** is Poet-in-Residence for Charlotte-Mecklenburg Schools. Her poems appear in *Carolina Quarterly*, *Pembroke Magazine*, and others. University Presses of Florida published her book of poems, *Mother Tongue*.

**Grace DiSanto** has two collections of poetry (both published by Briarpatch Press, Davidson): *The Eye Is Single*, winner of the Oscar Arnold Young Memorial Cup, 1982, and *Portrait of the Poet as Teacher*: James Dickey, 1986.

**Harriet Doar** of Charlotte, a former newspaper writer, has published poetry, fiction and articles in magazines and anthologies. She is the author of a volume of poems, *The Restless Water*, published by St. Andrews Press.

**Hilda Downer**, presently a graduate student at ASU, lives in Boone with her husband, Bruce Richter, and son Branch. She is the author of one book, *Bandana Creek*. She is currently finishing a novel.

**Ann Dunn**, poet and dancer, has toured her programs, a complex texture of word and movement image, in 17 states and Italy. Her poems, plays, and critical articles have appeared in journals, anthologies and newspapers across the US.

**Clyde Edgerton** is the author of *Raney* and *Walking Across Egypt*, both novels. He lives in Durham and teaches at St. Andrews College in Laurinburg, NC. "Outdoors Is Closed" is sung on the album and tape "Walking Across Egypt."

**Grace Ellis** is a teacher and playwright living in Moore County. The poem included in this anthology is adapted from her play, "The Hidden Treasure of Moore."

**Rebecca J. Finch** was graduated from UNC-G in 1970. She taught for several years and has a lab to clone plants *in vitro* for the family nursery in Bailey, NC. Her poems and articles have appeared in various publications.

**Charles Fort** is Director of the Creative Writing Program and Associate Professor of English at the University of North Carolina at Wilmington. He is the author of *The Town Clock Burning*, St. Andrews Press, 1985.

**Grace L. Gibson** teaches at St. Andrews Presbyterian College. She has two books of poetry, *Home In Time* (1977) and *Drakes Branch* (1982). She is at work on a prose collection.

**Marie Gilbert** of Greensboro is the author of *From Comfort* and *The Song and The Seed*, both from Green River Press, University Center, Michigan.

**Anna-Carolyn Stirewalt Gilbo** is author of *I Hate You! Love, Don*. She has published in *Hyperion*, *Soundings in Poetry*, *St. Andrews Review*, and others. She is active in several writing groups and is working on her second novel.

**Elaine L. Goolsby** was born on a NC tobacco farm, and lives in Durham. A wife, mother, social worker, and writer of poetry, journals, and letters, she is currently working on a manuscript of letters.

**Margaret A. Graham** is author of 9 books. She is currently working on a novel, *Anna*, and Harper & Row will release *Resurrection Stories* and *Miracle Stories* in 1988. Works in progress are *Faith Stories* and *Vision Stories*, Harper & Row.

**Elinor Owens Gray** is a member of The Burlington Writers Club, The Poetry Society of America, and The North Carolina Poetry Society, Inc. She has been published in national magazines and anthologies. She has a novel, *Mizz*.

**Dean M. Hale** is a retired medical laboratory supervisor. He lives in North Carolina.

**Bobby Sidna Hart**, a Weymouth Writer-in-Residence 1986-1987, writes poetry, essays and short stories. "Carolina Mountain Man" appeared in *Signs Along The Way* (NCPS Anthology 1986). She is a member of the NC Writer's Network.

**Ardis Messick Hatch**, a poet, critic and writing teacher for 20 years, is well-known

in the PITS Program, and is a master teacher on The National Humanities Faculty. Her books include *The Illusion of Water* and *To Defend A Form*.

**Gwyn Harris**, a native of Laurinburg and graduate of Duke University, is now a graduate student at Pembroke State University. A high school English teacher, she has two sons and is "a lover of nature, travel, and words."

**Tom Hawkins** has published poetry and stories in literary magazines including *Intro*, *Ploughshares*, *Carolina Quarterly*, *Greensboro Review*, *Poetry Australia*, and *Kansas Quarterly*. His book of short stories will be published soon.

**Leon Carrington Hinton**, a Burlington poet and short story writer, is past president of the North Carolina Poetry Society, on the boards of the NC Writer's Network and the Poetry Council of NC. He has published in anthologies.

**Judy Hogan** lives in Saxapahaw and is editor/publisher of The Carolina Wren Press. Her third book is *Susannah, Teach Me To Love/Grace, Sing To Me*. She teaches free classes for writers in the Durham and Burlington libraries.

**Lois Holt** has published in *International Poetry Review*, *Crucible*, *Pembroke Magazine* and *Portfolio*, 1983. Her work has appeared in several anthologies: *Writer's Choice*, *New NC Poetry: The Eighties*, and *Signs Along the Way*.

**Lorraine Hueneke** is a native of New England and she has lived in North Carolina 20 years. This, her first published poem, was written at Weymouth in 1985. She has had articles published in *The State Magazine*, *Charlotte Observer*, and *NC Catholic*.

**Gladys Owings Hughes** is president of the North Carolina Poetry Society. Her poems have been published in state and national magazines and anthologies.

**Ellen Turlington Johnston-Hale**, Poet-in-the-Schools, consultant, and author of five books of poetry, has a PBS series, "Poetry Alive" that airs nationally. Her poems have appeared in *St. Andrews Review*, *The Lyricist*, and *Crucible*.

**Paul Jones**, a systems programmer, lives with a classical archaeologist and two Turkish Salukis. He is past winner of NCAC Fellowship, Carolina Quarterly Prize, Southern Humanities Review Prize, and co-editor of *Cardinal*.

**Susan B. Katz** is a Raleigh journalist, columnist, and poet whose work has appeared in *The Kansas Quarterly*, *St. Andrews Review*, *Pembroke Magazine*, *Woman's Day*, *The Spectator*, *Southern Magazine*, and elsewhere.

**Mary Kratt** is a Charlotte, NC poet with poems in *Stone Country*; *Tar River Poetry*; *Kansas Quarterly*; and *Chattahoochee*, a collection from Briarpatch Press, 1982; and four non-fiction books.

**E. Waverly Land** lives in Arlington, Virginia. He is a budget officer for the Office of the Secretary of the US Department of Health and Human Services. He is a graduate of St. Andrews College and has lived on the Outer Banks of NC.

**Julian Long** was Executive Director of the Sandhills Arts Council 1974-1980 and is now at North Texas State University's Center for Texas Studies. His poems, articles and review have appeared widely.

**Virginia Love Long** has released six volumes, including *Letters of Human Nature*, with Rochelle Holt, which was a 1985 Pulitzer nominee in the Small Press Prose Division.



She resides in her native Person County with her mother.

**Mitchell Forrest Lyman** was reared in Tidewater Virginia, and has lived in Florida, Maryland, and California before moving to Chapel Hill in 1968. She is a daughter, wife/widow, mother, neighbor, citizen...and poet-by-compulsion.

**Richard DeLos Mar** has poetry in anthologies and journals including the *New York Poetry Anthology*, *Manna*, and *North Carolina's 400 Years: Signs Along the Way*. He is a member of several writers organizations.

**Marcia McCredie**, a Raleigh resident, works as a technical writer for Telex Computer Products. She has recently published in *The Arts Journal* and *Wolphen Branch*.

**Agnes McDonald** teaches English at UNC-Wilmington. Her poems have appeared in a number of literary magazines and *Four North Carolina Women Poets* in 1982. She writes fiction, essays and articles on the teaching of writing.

**Michael McFee**, visiting Poet-in-Residence at Cornell for 1986-87, received a fellowship in creative writing from the NEA for 1987-88. His first book of poems was *Plain Air*. His poems have appeared in many publications.

**Sam McKay** is a Presbyterian minister who occupies himself with many interests including poetry and photography. He is a past president of NCPSI, is active in several poetry groups, and lives with his wife, Martha, in Broadway.

**Joanna Allred McKethan** has published poems in *The Lyricist*, *Crucible*, and *Sanskrit*. Of 12 poems chosen for *Fields of Earth Forum*, over half won prizes. A prize winning water colorist, she exhibits in major shows in NC and SC.

**Heather Ross Miller**, winner of the 1983 North Carolina Medal for Literature, has published eight books of fiction and poetry. She teaches in the University of Arkansas MFA program.

**Shirley Moody** has been active as a poet in the NC Artist-in-Schools program since 1979. She was one of *Four NC Women Poets*, St. Andrews Press, 1982, and has a forthcoming volume, *Charmers*, from St. Andrews Press in 1988.

**Ruth Moose** has published *To Survive*, and *Finding Things In The Dark*. She has short stories in *Atlantic Monthly*, *Redbook*, *Greensboro Review*, and a collection, *The Wreath Ribbon Quilt*. She is poetry editor of *The Arts Journal*.

**Jean Morgan**, born in Lancaster County, Pa, now lives in Charlotte, NC. She teaches at Queens College and works as a visiting artist in the Carolinas. Jean read "Leni" March 29, 1987, at the Library of Congress.

**Kay Nelson** is a past president of the Burlington Writers Club, a member of the NC Poetry Society, and serves as secretary on the Board of Directors of Alamance County Arts Council. Her work has appeared in the *Wayah Review*.

**Sallie Nixon**, teacher and poet, is a native of Henderson who lives in Lincolnton. Two collections, journals, anthologies, and textbooks carry her work. A University of Nebraska Phi Beta Kappa, she has won national and state honors.

**Maud R. Oaks**, a past president of the NC Poetry Society, is a member of that group and of the Burlington Writers Club. She lives in Burlington, NC with her husband, Charles, and has a daughter, Laura Oaks, of Hillsborough.

**Pamolu Oldham** has published in *Agora*, *Love Stories By New Women*, *The Columbia Review*, *Ink*, *The Arts Journal*, *Crane's Creek Review*, *Luna Tuck*, and *The Southern Poetry Review*. She is Co-Editor of *Old Age Ain't For Sissies*.

**Lu Overton**, a native of Wadesboro, has degrees in journalism and English. Her poems have been published on local, state, and national levels; her feature stories in leading daily papers. She is currently writing and teaching.

**Guy Owen** was teacher, editor, writer, and founder of *Southern Poetry Review*. He was awarded the Sir Walter Raleigh and NC Award in fiction, and the Roanoke-Chowan in poetry. He married Dorothy Jennings, and had two sons.

**Cindy Paris** lives and works in Durham. Her poems have previously been published in *Poetry East*, *Carolina Quarterly*, *Piedmont Literary Review*, *Plainsong*, *Crescent Review*, *Plains Poetry Journal*, and *Blue Pitcher*.

**Constance Pierce** has a short story collection, *When Things Get Back to Normal*, and a chapbook, *Philippe At His Bath*. Recipient of an NEA fellowship, she is in the English Department at Miami University in Oxford, Ohio.

**Bobby G. Price** is a native of Goldsboro, NC. His chapbook, *Strangulation*, won the 1983 Bunn-McClelland Memorial Chapbook Award. He has a full-length volume of poetry, *Visualize* and was at the Atlantic Center for the Arts in Florida.

**Reynolds Price**, James B. Duke professor of English at Duke University, has published six novels, two collections of short stories, two collections of poems, a collection of essays, and two plays during his career spanning three decades.

**Sister Bernetta Quinn** has just finished *Pilgrimage To The Stars: Kingdom Inferno, I*, a young person's guide to *The Divine Comedy*, on which she has been working steadily since she taught the epic at St. Andrews College in 1982.

**Sam Ragan**, Poet Laureate of North Carolina, is Director of the Writers-in-Residence Program at Weymouth. He has published four books: *The Tree in the Far Pasture*, *To The Water's Edge*, *Journey Into Morning*, and *A Walk Into April*.

**Sandra Redding** is a grandmother and student in the MFA Creative Writing Program at UNC-Greensboro. Currently, she is working on a novel.

**Stephen Morris Roberts** grew up in Winston-Salem. He received his BA at UNC-Chapel Hill, and his MA at Hollins College. He is currently a teaching assistant in the MFA Program in creative writing at George Mason University.

**Nancy Frost Rouse**, of Lucama, received her BA in English from Atlantic Christian College. Her poems have appeared in various NC publications. In 1987 she was awarded the Poet Laureate Award of the NC Poetry Society.

**Anne Russell** is a journalism professor at Pembroke State University. Her play "The Porch" was produced in Greenville, Raleigh, and Cincinnati. Her book of poetry *Sketches* is set at Wrightsville Beach, where she lives.

**Rebecca Ball Rust** is founder of the NC Haiku Society and author of the books *The Outside of Haiku*, *I Remember Morehead*, and *Tu-Tu, The Would-Be Ballerina*. Her prose and poetry have been published in the U.S.A., Japan, and Canada.

**Salvatore Salerno** teaches English at UNC-G and NC A&T University. He has been

published in such magazines as *Descant*, *Poem*, *Greensboro Review*, and *Wormwood Review*. He was a poet and playwright in the NC Visiting Artist Program.

**Judith Holmes Settle** started writing and publishing poetry a year shy of her fiftieth birthday. Since then she has included fiction and non-fiction, discovering that in the fullness of time she can do things she never dreamed.

**Ruby P. Shackelford** is a retired professor of English at Atlantic Christian College, and past president of NC Poetry Society. Her publications include: *Dreamer's Wine*, *Poems*, *Visual Diary*, *Poems 4*, *Ascend The Hill*, and *Bamboo Harp*.

**R.T. Smith** is Poet-in-Residence at Auburn University. His newest book is *Birch-Light* (Tamarack Editions).

**Stephen E. Smith** is the author of *The Bushnell Hamp Poems*, *The Great Saturday Night Swindle* (Stories), and *Honeysuckle Shower and Other Parables*. He lives in Southern Pines.

**Mary C. Sotherly**, Writer-in-Residence for Wake County Arts Council, on the Board of Directors for NCWN, Chairman of NC Writers' Conference, publishes in *Pembroke*, *Four NC Women Poets*, *Southern Poetry Review*, and *Arts Journal*.

**Thad Stem, Jr.**, native of Oxford, NC, published seventeen books of poetry and prose including *The Jackknife Horse*, winner of the Roanoke-Chowan Award, and *Spur Line*. *Journey Proud* is a volume of selected poems. He died in 1980.

**Shelby Stephenson** was born in Johnston County, NC. He has published two chapbooks, *Middle Creek Poems* and *Carolina Shout!* He is Professor of English at Pembroke State University, where he edits *Pembroke Magazine*.

**Lee Steuer** was born in 1958 in Mt. Pleasant, SC, and is a life long resident of South Carolina. He now lives and writes in Spartanburg, SC.

**Luther Stirewalt** is a retired professor of Classical Languages and New Testament Literature. He and his wife have built their own home, where he continues writing and publishing poetry and articles on ancient letter writing.

**Juli Suk**, Associate Editor of *Southern Poetry Review*, has had poems appear in *Embers*, *Montana Review*, *Visions*, and *Zone 3*. She was a prize winner in the *Devil's Millhopper* poetry competition.

**Maureen D Sutton** has poetry in *Pembroke Magazine*, *The Cape Rock*, *Sandhills Review*, *San Fernando Poetry Journal*, *Up Against The Wall*, and *Crane's Creek Review*. She is a member of the NC Writer's Network, and the NC Poetry Society.

**Sally Svee**, a member of Burlington Writers, NCPS, and the NC Writer's Network, has received awards in poetry and fiction, and been published in *Wayah Review*, *Bay Leaves*, *Signs Along the Way*, and *O. Henry Festival Stories* (1987).

**Hazel Foster Thomas**, author of *Under Papa's Oak Tree* has published in more than a dozen magazines, anthologies, and papers. She is a native of Sanford, NC, and says she likes to write from experience best.

**Kate Kelly Thomas** returned to poetry after her children were grown and educated. Her work is published in various magazines and anthologies. Kate is a native Tarheel and lives near Sanford, North Carolina.

**Thomas Walters**, a poet, novelist, and painter, was professor of English at NCSU from



1964 until his death in 1983. His works include *Always Next*, *Seeing in the Dark*, and *Randolph Bourne—An American Radical*.

**Marsha White Warren**, Associate Editor of the NCPS's *Signs Along The Way*, has lived in North Carolina since 1961. Her poems appear in three anthologies. She has a children's novel, *Josie*, in progress.

**Mary Warren-Harris** is a reporter on *The Pilot* and lives in Southern Pines. She has published in several magazines over the years.

**John Foster West** is a professor of English at Appalachian State University. Author of two novels and three books of poetry, his novel, *Time Was*, was a candidate for the Pulitzer Prize.

**Reed Whittemore** is the Poet Laureate of the state of Maryland and was twice a poetry consultant to the Library of Congress. An award winning poet, he has won many prizes for his poetry.

**Nina A. Wicker** of Sanford, North Carolina has chosen grandchildren, camping, writing, and the study of poetry to fill her retirement years. Her collector's item of Haiku, *October Rain on My Window*, was published in 1984.

**Emily Herring Wilson** is a teacher at Salem College.

**Anna Wooten-Hawkins** has published poetry and poetry criticism in numerous magazines, journals, and anthologies. Her chapbook *Satan Speaks of Eve In Seven Voices, After the Fall* was published by the NC Writer's Network (1986).

**Lisa-Catherine Yost** is a senior at Appalachian State University. She has published in *Awarding Winning Poems*, *The Pilot*, and *North Carolina's 400 Years: Signs Along the Way*. She is the Associate Editor of *Cold Mountain Review*.

**Lei Zimmerman** is a graduate of St. Mary's College in Raleigh, NC, and is presently attending the College of Charleston. She has been writing poetry and fiction for several years.

## Artists

**Benjamin E. Bessette** is best known as the manager and Maitre d' of Sleddon's Restaurant in Southern Pines. His painting is limited to an occasional course at Sandhills C.C., and in Marblehead during the summer closing of Sleddon's.

**Thomas E. Culbreth** grew up in Southern Pines. Since graduating from NCSU in 1965 in Product Design, he has worked in Industrial Design and Graphics in both this country and Australia. He is currently working in advertising.

**Danila Devins**, primarily a portrait artist, specializes in dogs and horses. She studied at the Institute of Art, Florence, Italy, and Ringling School of Art, Florida. She has exhibited in the Republic of Panama, Canal Zone, and Italy.

**Arthur Frank** studied in France and continued in the vein of French Impressionism. A particularly fine landscape artist, he has left some paintings of Maine where he summered. He was a contemporary and friend of James Boyd.

**Maureen Frederick** received her art degree from London University in England. Currently living in Pinehurst, she has taught Batik and Textile Design in Iran, and has

exhibited Batiks and Watercolors in Iran, Spain, the UK, and the US.

**Ann Listokin** is a composer, pianist, and teacher. She has composed music for chorus, theater, voice, solo instruments, string quartets, and other chamber groups. Her music has been performed in America and Europe.

**Meredith Martens** studied at the Corcoran School of Art, San Francisco and Maryland Art Institutes, and her exhibitions include Palm Beach and Paris. Painting famous race horses (including *Secretariat*) is her specialty.

**Mary Katherine Philipp** is currently pursuing a career in medicine. She has had an exhibit of her sketches at Duke University and has won several awards for her art work. She enjoys working in pencil and oil.

**Mary B. Preyer** of Southern Pines, a B.F.A. in Interior Design from UNC-G, has served on the Editorial Staffs of McCalls and Modern Bride. Working in pencil, pen and ink, and watercolor, she specializes in flower paintings.

**Richard Munger Preyer** won the *National Scholastic Art Award First Prize in Oil* while still in high school. A graduate of UNC and the Phoenix School of Design in NY, his paintings ranged from outdoor scenes to portraits.

**Jody Scott**, originally from PA, has lived in NC for eleven years. In 1982 he opened his own graphic design studio in Southern Pines. His paintings have appeared in shows in PA and NC. Lewis Dillon assisted with this picture.

**Susan Carlton Smith**, of Durham, is Conservator of the DUMC Library. A professional illustrator of botanical journals, she has illustrated two children's books, and *Wildflowers of NC*. Her work is known internationally.

**Catharine Callaway Stirewalt** graduated from Duke in 1971 as a painting major. She now designs and makes jewelry, for which she has won several awards. She lives in Hillsborough, NC.

**Nancy Williams** has exhibited her watercolor, acrylic, and egg tempera paintings throughout the US. Her subjects vary from wildlife and landscapes, to portraits. This prize-winning artist is currently painting in Alaska.









The Weymouth Center for the Arts and Humanities was established by the Friends of Weymouth and dedicated by Governor Jim Hunt. The Writers-in-Residence Program was the first activity established at the Weymouth Center. This book is an outgrowth of that program. The above drawing is the view of the south side of the former home of James and Katharine Boyd.